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THE NOTE-BOOKS  
OF  
SAMUEL BUTLER

AUTHOR OF *EREWHON*

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# THE NOTE-BOOKS OF SAMUEL BUTLER

## INTRODUCTION

SAMUEL BUTLER acquired early the habit of noting down anything that interested him. In 1874, finding his notes in confusion, he started a note-book on a new system with an index : but the notes were constantly being re-written, decanted into his books, added to and destroyed. In 1891 he began to copy them out and to re-edit them finally, an undertaking that occupied him, in the intervals of other work, during the rest of his life. At his death, in 1902, he left five volumes of notes, closely written on sermon paper, averaging 225 pages per volume.

The best way to give an idea of the great variety of subjects touched upon in these volumes will be to subjoin a short statement of the principal events of his life on which the entries chiefly hang.

- 1835. Dec. 4, Samuel Butler born at Langar Rectory, Nottingham, the son of the Rev. Thomas Butler, who was the son of Dr. Samuel Butler, head-master of Shrewsbury school from 1798 to 1838, and afterwards Bishop of Lichfield.
- 1843-4. Spent the winter in Rome and Naples with his family.
- 1846. Went to school at Allesley, near Coventry.
- 1848. Went to school at Shrewsbury under Dr. Kennedy.

1848. Went to Italy for the second time with his family.  
    ,, First heard the music of Handel.
1854. Entered at St. John's College, Cambridge.
1858. Bracketed twelfth in the first class of the Classical Tripos and took his degree.  
    ,, Went to London and began to prepare for ordination, living among the poor and doing parish work; this led to his doubting the efficacy of infant baptism and hence to his declining to take orders.
1859. Sailed for New Zealand and started sheep-farming. Contributed articles to colonial newspapers.
1863. *A first year in Canterbury Settlement*: made out of his letters home to his family together with two articles reprinted from *The Eagle* (the magazine of St. John's College, Cambridge).
1864. Sold out his sheep run, returned to England, and, having brought back enough to enable him to live quietly, settled for good at 15, Clifford's Inn, London, and began life as a painter, exhibiting pictures from time to time at the Royal Academy and other exhibitions.
1865. *The Evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ as contained in the Four Evangelists critically examined*: a pamphlet of viii. + 48 pp.
- 1869-70. Was in Italy for four months, his health having broken down in consequence of over-work.
1872. *Erewhon; or, Over the Range*: a work of Satire and Imagination.
1873. *Erewhon* translated into Dutch.  
    ,, *The Fair Haven*: an ironical work, purporting to be "in defence of the miraculous element in our Lord's ministry upon earth, both as against rationalistic impugners and certain orthodox defenders," written under the pseudonym of John Pickard Owen, with a memoir of the supposed author by his brother, William Bickersteth Owen.

1874. *Mr. Heatherley's Holiday*, his most important oil painting, exhibited at the Royal Academy Exhibition.
1876. Having invested his money in various companies that failed, one of which had its works in Canada, and having spent much time during the last few years in that country, trying unsuccessfully to save his capital, he now returned to London, and during the next ten years experienced serious financial difficulties.
1878. *Life and Habit*: An Essay after a Completer View of Evolution.
1879. *Evolution Old and New*: A comparison of the theories of Buffon, Dr. Erasmus Darwin and Lamarck, with that of Mr. Charles Darwin.
- ," Contributed some articles to the *Examiner* on *A Clergyman's Doubts* and on *God the Known and God the Unknown*, not yet republished.
- ," *Erewhon* translated into German.
1880. *Unconscious Memory*: A comparison between the theory of Dr. Ewald Hering, Professor of Physiology in the University of Prague, and the *Philosophy of the Unconscious* of Dr. Edward von Hartmann, with translations from both these authors and preliminary chapters bearing upon *Life and Habit*, *Evolution Old and New*, and Mr. Charles Darwin's edition of Dr. Krause's *Erasmus Darwin*.
1881. A property at Shrewsbury in which, under his grandfather's will, he had a reversionary interest contingent on his surviving his father, was re-settled so as to make his reversion absolute ; he mortgaged this reversion and bought a small property near London ; this temporarily alleviated his financial embarrassment but added to his work, for he spent much time in the management of the houses, learnt book-keeping by double-entry, and kept elaborate accounts.

1881. *Alps and Sanctuaries* of Piedmont and the Canton Ticino ; illustrated by the author, Charles Gogin and Henry Festing Jones ; an account of his holiday travels with many dissertations on most of the subjects that interested him.
1883. Began to compose music as nearly as he could in the style of Handel.
1884. *Selections from Previous Works* with *A Psalm of Montreal* and *Remarks* on Mr. G. J. Romanes' *Mental Evolution in Animals*.
1885. *Gavottes, Minuets, Fugues* and other short pieces for the piano by Samuel Butler and Henry Festing Jones.
1886. Holbein's *La Danse* : a note on a drawing in the Museum at Basel.  
" Death of his father and end of his financial embarrassments.
1887. *Luck or Cunning* as the main means of organic modification ? An attempt to throw additional light upon Mr. Charles Darwin's theory of Natural Selection.
1887. Was entertained at dinner by the Municipio of Varallo-Sesia on the Sacro Monte.
1888. Took up photography.  
" *Ex Voto* : an account of the Sacro Monte or New Jerusalem at Varallo-Sesia, with some notice of Tabachetti's remaining work at Crea and illustrations from photographs by the author.  
" *Narcissus* : a cantata in the Handelian form, words and music by Samuel Butler and Henry Festing Jones.  
" In this and the two following years contributed some articles to the *Universal Review*, most of which were republished after his death.
1892. Went to Sicily (the first of many visits) to collect evidence in support of his theory identifying the

- Scheria and Ithaca of the *Odyssey* with Trapani and the neighbouring Mount Eryx.
1894. *Ex Voto* translated into Italian by Cavaliere Angelo Rizzetti.
1895. Went to Greece and the Troad to make up his mind about the topography of the *Iliad*.
1896. *The Life and Letters of Dr. Samuel Butler* (his grandfather) in so far as they illustrate the scholastic, religious and social life of England from 1790–1840.
1897. *The Authoress of the Odyssey*, where and when she wrote, who she was, the use she made of the *Iliad*, and how the poem grew under her hands.
1898. *The Iliad* rendered into English prose.
1899. *Shakespeare's Sonnets* reconsidered and in part rearranged, with introductory chapters, notes, and a reprint of the original 1609 edition.
1900. *The Odyssey* rendered into English prose.
1901. *Erewhon Revisited*, twenty years later, both by the original discoverer of the country and by his son.
1902. June 18, death of Samuel Butler.
1903. *The Way of All Flesh*, a novel, written between 1872 and 1885, published by Mr. R. A. Streatfeild, his literary executor.
1904. *Seven Sonnets and A Psalm of Montreal* printed for private circulation.
- „ *Essays on Life, Art and Science*, being reprints of two lectures and of his *Universal Review* articles.
- „ *Ulysses*: an oratorio, words and music by Samuel Butler and Henry Festing Jones.

The note-books contain entries on his early life at Langar, his school-days at Shrewsbury, Handel, Cambridge, the Christian religion, literature, New Zealand, sheep-

farming, painting, evolution, money, speculation, book-keeping, Italy, music, natural history, archæology, botany, psychology, metaphysics, the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, architecture, ethics, photography, the *Sonnets* of Shakespeare. Every one of these subjects attracted Butler and interested him profoundly, and his published works are full of allusions to them. In a general sense there is a kind of order among the notes: one would look in the earlier volumes for entries about New Zealand and evolution, and in the later for notes about the *Odyssey* and the *Sonnets*. But there is no attempt at any arrangement, and anywhere may be found a philosophical reflection between a note giving the best hotel in some Italian town and another about Harry Nicholls and Herbert Campbell as the Babes in the Wood in the pantomime at the Grecian Theatre; so that for continuous reading the volumes are a little distracting. He says in one of the notes:

“A man may make, as it were, cash entries of himself in a day-book, but the entries in the ledger and the balancing of the accounts should be done by others.”

In posting a selection of Butler's entries on himself, I have, where possible, endeavoured so to group them that they shall throw light one upon another, and, in order to keep before the reader the fact that they have been shifted, I have usually indicated in the reference the volume and page from which each note is taken. When the date to which a note refers could be ascertained and anything turns upon it, I have generally given it. A name has been suppressed and a word omitted here and there, where offence might have been caused by printing them. A few obvious errors have been corrected, and occasionally, chiefly for the sake of avoiding repetition, two or more notes have been condensed into one. A note has not been omitted merely because it appears already in his published works, whether I knew where to find it or not; I have thought that few readers will object to meet with it again.

The notes disclose less disagreement among themselves than might have been expected considering that they cover a period of over forty years. This is not because his mind had no power of growth : it is because they were all finally reconsidered and edited during the last eleven years of his life. Most of the contradictions that appear will be found, on a little reflection, to resolve themselves into illustration of the saying that it takes two half-truths to make a whole truth.

H. F. J.

## I

### WHEN I AM DEAD (I. 135)

do not let people say of me that I suffered from misrepresentation and neglect. I was neglected and misrepresented ; very likely not half as much as I supposed, but, nevertheless, to some extent neglected and misrepresented. I growl at this sometimes, but if the question were seriously put to me whether I would go on as I am or become famous in my own lifetime, I have no hesitation about which I should prefer. I will willingly pay the few hundreds of pounds which the neglect of my works costs me in order to be let alone and not plagued by the people who would come round me if I were known. The probability is that I shall remain after my death as obscure as I am now ; if this be so, the obscurity will, no doubt, be merited, and if not, my books will work not only as well without my having been known in my lifetime but a great deal better ; my follies and blunders will the better escape notice to the enhancing of the value of anything that may be found in my books. The only two things I should greatly care about if I had more money are a few more country outings and a little more varied and better cooked food [1882].

P.S.—I have long since obtained everything that a reasonable man can wish for [1895].

#### OUR CONCEIT (I. 30).

He is a poor creature who does not believe himself to be better than the whole world else. No matter how ill we may be, nor how low we may have fallen, we would not change identity with any other person. Hence our self-conceit sustains and always must sustain us till death takes us and our conceit together so that we need no more sustaining.

#### THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN (II. 91).

The world admits that there is another world, that there is a kingdom, veritable and worth having, which, nevertheless, is invisible and has nothing to do with any kingdom such as we now see. It agrees that the wisdom of this other kingdom is foolishness here on earth, while the wisdom of the world is foolishness in the Kingdom of Heaven. In our hearts we know that the Kingdom of Heaven is the higher of the two and the better worth living and dying for, and that, if it is to be won, it must be sought steadfastly and in singleness of heart by those who put all else on one side, and, shrinking from no sacrifice, are ready to face shame, poverty and torture here rather than abandon the hope of the prize of their high calling. Nobody who doubts any of this is worth talking with. The question is where is this Heavenly Kingdom, and what way are we to take to find it? Happily the answer is easy, for we are not likely to go wrong if in all simplicity, humility and good faith we heartily desire to find it and follow the dictates of ordinary common-sense.

#### THE PHILOSOPHER (I. 106).

He should have made many mistakes and been saved

often by the skin of his teeth, for the skin of one's teeth is the most teaching thing about one. He should have been, or at any rate believed himself, a great fool and a great criminal. He should have cut himself adrift from society, and yet not be without society. He should have given up all, even Christ Himself, for Christ's sake. He should be above fear or love or hate, and yet know them extremely well. He should have lost all save a small competence and know what a vantage ground it is to be an outcast. Destruction and Death say they have heard the sound of Wisdom with their ears, and the philosopher must have been close up to these if he too would hear it.

#### DEATH (II. 2).

There will come a supreme moment in which there will be care neither for ourselves nor for others, but a complete *abandon*, a *sans souci* of unspeakable indifference, and this moment will never be taken from us ; time cannot rob us of it, but, as far as we are concerned, it will last for ever and ever without flying. So that, even for the most wretched and most guilty, there is a heaven at last where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt and where thieves do not break through nor steal. To himself every one is an immortal : he may know that he is going to die, but he can never know that he is dead.

#### AFTER WE ARE DEAD (II. 11)

it matters not to the life we have led in ourselves what people may say of us, but it matters much to the life we lead in others, and this should be our true life.

#### MYSELF AND MY BOOKS (II. 111).

Bodily offspring I do not leave, but mental offspring I  
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do. Well, my books do not have to be sent to school and college and then insist on going into the Church or take to drinking or marry their mother's maid.

#### MY THOUGHTS (I. 6).

They are like persons met upon a journey ; I think them very agreeable at first, but soon find, as a rule, that I am tired of them.

#### OUR IDEAS (I. 30).

They are for the most part like bad sixpences, and we spend our lives in trying to pass them on one another.

#### MOUSE IDEAS AND CAT IDEAS (I. 80).

There are some ideas which are like mice ; no sooner have we stopped their holes in one place than they gnaw themselves new ones in another, turning up again and again *ad infinitum*. The only thing to do is to keep a cat idea, so to speak, which shall assimilate them, comprehend them, or, more plainly, gobble them up as soon as they put in an appearance.

#### GOD'S LAWS (I. 229).

The true laws of God are the laws of our own well-being.

#### THE FINEST MEN (I. 206).

I suppose an Italian peasant, or a Breton, Norman or English fisherman, is about the best thing Nature does in the way of men—the richer and the poorer being alike mistakes.

## THOUGHTS ON VICE AND VIRTUE (I. 175).

Virtue is something which it would be impossible to over-rate if it had not been over-rated. The world can ill spare any vice which has obtained long and largely among civilised people. Such a vice must have some good along with its deformities. The question "how if every one were to do so and so?" may be met with another, "how if no one were to do it?" We are a body corporate as well as a collection of individuals.

As a matter of private policy I doubt whether the moderately vicious are more unhappy than the moderately virtuous. "Very vicious" is certainly less happy than "tolerably virtuous," but this is about all. What pass muster as the extremes of virtue probably make people quite as unhappy as extremes of vice do.

The truest virtue has ever inclined toward excess rather than asceticism; that she should do this is reasonable as well as observable, for virtue should be as nice a calculator of chances as other people, and will make due allowance for the chance of not being found out. Virtue knows that it is impossible to get on without compromise, and tunes herself, as it were, a trifle sharp to allow for an inevitable fall in playing. So the Psalmist says, "If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss: O Lord, who may abide it?" and by this he admits that the highest conceivable form of virtue still leaves room for some compromise with vice. So again Shakespeare writes, "They say, best men are moulded out of faults; and, for the most, become much more the better for being little bad."

## VIRTUE (I. 13).

She has never yet been adequately represented by any who have had any claim to be considered virtuous. It is the sub-vicious who best understand virtue. Let the virtuous

people stick to describing vice—which they can do well enough.

### MY LIFE (I. 213).

I have led a more virtuous life than I intended, or thought I was leading. When I was young I thought I was vicious: now I know that I was not and that my unconscious knowledge was sounder than my conscious. I regret some things that I have done, but not many. I regret that so many should think I did much which I never did, and should know of what I did in so garbled and distorted a fashion as to have done me much mischief. But if things were known as they actually happened I believe I should have less to be ashamed of than a good many of my neighbours—and less also to be proud of.

### SIN (I. 33).

Sin is like a mountain with two aspects according to whether it is viewed before or after it has been reached: yet both aspects are real.

### MORALITY (I. 169)

turns on whether the pleasure precedes or follows the pain. Thus it is immoral to get drunk because the headache comes after the drinking, but if the headache came first and the drunkenness afterwards, it would be moral to get drunk.

### MORALITY AND CONTRADICTION IN TERMS (I. 3).

Every discovery is immoral, for it upsets existing *mores*. Stagnation would be perfectly moral but that, if perfect, it would destroy all *mores* whatever. So there must always be an immorality in morality, and, in like manner, a morality in immorality. For there will be an element of habitual

and legitimate custom even in the most unhabitual and detestable things that can be done at all.

#### FOUNDATIONS OF MORALITY (I. 170).

These are like all other foundations ; if you dig too much about them the superstructure will come tumbling down.

#### MORALITY (I. 14).

It is the custom of one's country and the current feeling of one's peers. Cannibalism is moral in a cannibal country.

#### ABNORMAL DEVELOPMENTS (I. 185).

If a man can get no other food it is more natural for him to kill another man and eat him than to starve. Our horror is rather at the circumstances that make it natural for the man to do this than at the man himself. So with other things the desire for which is inherited through countless ancestors, it is more natural for men to obtain the nearest thing they can to these, even by the most abnormal means if the ordinary channels are closed, than to forego them altogether. The abnormal growth should be regarded as disease, but, nevertheless, as showing more health and vigour than no growth at all would do. I said this in *Life and Habit* when I wrote [chapter iii. p. 52], "it is more righteous in a man that he should eat strange food and that his cheek so much as lank not, than that he should starve if the strange food be at his command."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "On the Alps  
It is reported thou didst eat strange flesh,  
Which some did die to look on : and all this—  
It wounds thine honour that I speak it now—  
Was borne so like a soldier, that thy cheek  
So much as lank'd not,"—*Ant. and Cleop.*, I. iii. 68-71.

## ADVICE TO YOUNG PEOPLE (I. 119).

You will sometimes find your elders laying their heads together and saying what a bad thing it is for young men to come into a little money—that those always do best who have no expectancy, and the like. They will then quote some drivel from one of the Kingsleys about the deadening effect an income of £300 a year will have upon a man. Avoid any one whom you may hear talk in this way. The fault lies not with the legacy (which would certainly be better if there were more of it) but with those who have so mismanaged our education that we go in even greater danger of losing the money than other people are.

## A PSALM OF MONTREAL.

The City of Montreal is one of the most rising and, in many respects, most agreeable on the American continent, but its inhabitants are as yet too busy with commerce to care greatly about the masterpieces of old Greek Art. In the Montreal Museum of Natural History I came upon two plaster casts, one of the Antinous and the other of the Discobolus—not the good one, but in my poem of course I intend the good one—banished from public view to a room where were all manner of skins, plants, snakes, insects, etc., and, in the middle of these, an old man stuffing an owl. “Ah,” said I, “so you have some antiques here; why don’t you put them where people can see them?” “Well, sir,” answered the custodian, “you see they are rather vulgar.” He then talked a great deal and said his brother did all Mr. Spurgeon’s printing. The dialogue—perhaps true, perhaps imaginary, perhaps a little of the one and a little of the other—between the writer and this old man gave rise to the lines that follow.

Stowed away in a Montreal lumber room  
The Discobolus standeth and turneth his face to the wall;

Dusty, cobweb-covered, maimed and set at naught,  
Beauty crieth in an attic and no man regardeth :  
O God ! O Montreal !

Beautiful by night and day, beautiful in summer and winter,  
Whole or maimed, always and alike beautiful—  
He preacheth gospel of grace to the skins of owls  
And to one who seasoneth the skins of Canadian owls :  
O God ! O Montreal !

When I saw him I was wroth and I said, “O Discobolus !  
Beautiful Discobolus, a Prince both among gods and men,  
What doest thou here, how camest thou hither, Discobolus,  
Preaching gospel in vain to the skins of owls ?”  
O God ! O Montreal !

And I turned to the man of skins and said unto him, “O thou man of  
skins,  
Wherefore hast thou done thus to shame the beauty of the Discobolus ?”  
But the Lord had hardened the heart of the man of skins  
And he answered, “My brother-in-law is haberdasher to Mr. Spurgeon.”  
O God ! O Montreal !

“The Discobolus is put here because he is vulgar—  
He has neither vest nor pants with which to cover his limbs ;  
I, Sir, am a person of most respectable connections,—  
My brother-in-law is haberdasher to Mr. Spurgeon.”  
O God ! O Montreal !

Then I said, “O brother-in-law to Mr. Spurgeon’s haberdasher,  
Who seasonest also the skins of Canadian owls,  
Thou callest ‘trousers’ ‘pants,’ whereas I call them ‘trousers,’  
Therefore thou art in hell-fire and may the Lord pity thee !”  
O God ! O Montreal !

“Preferrest thou the gospel of Montreal to the gospel of Hellas,  
The gospel of thy connection with Mr. Spurgeon’s haberdashery to the  
gospel of the Discobolus ?”  
Yet none the less blasphemed he beauty, saying, “The Discobolus hath  
no gospel,—  
But my brother-in-law is haberdasher to Mr. Spurgeon.”  
O God ! O Montreal !<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Knowing that Mr. Edward Clodd had had something to do with the appearance of this poem in the *Spectator* I wrote asking him to tell me what he remembered about it. He very kindly replied, 29th October, 1905 :

“The ‘Psalm’ was recited to me at the Century Club by Butler. He gave me a copy of it which I read to the late Chas. Anderson, Vicar of St. John’s, Limehouse, who lent it to Matt. Arnold (when inspecting Anderson’s Schools) who lent it to Richd. Holt Hutton who, with Butler’s consent, printed it in the *Spectator* of 18th May, 1878.” [H. F. J.]

## RELIGION (I. 133).

Is there any religion whose followers can be pointed to as distinctly more amiable and trustworthy than those of any other? If so, this should be enough. I find the nicest and best people generally profess no religion at all, but are ready to like the best men of all religions.

## HEAVEN (I. 13)

is the work of the best and kindest men and women. Hell is the work of prigs, pedants and professional truth-tellers. The world is an attempt to make the best of heaven and hell.

## SCIENCE AND RELIGION (I. 75).

These are reconciled in amiable and sensible people but nowhere else.

## GENTLEMAN (I. 82).

If we are asked what is the most essential characteristic that underlies this word, the word itself will guide us to gentleness, to absence of such things as brow-beating, overbearing manners and fuss, and generally to consideration for other people.

## GOOD BREEDING THE SUMMUM BONUM (I. 48).

When people ask what faith we would substitute for that which we would destroy, we answer that we destroy no faith and need substitute none. We hold the glory of God to be the *summum bonum*, and so do Christians generally. It is on the question of what is the glory of God that we join issue. We say it varies with the varying phases of God as made manifest in His works, but that, so far as we are ourselves concerned, the glory of God is best advanced by

advancing that of man. If asked what is the glory of man we answer "good breeding"—using the words in their double sense and meaning both the continuance of the race and that grace of manner which the words are more commonly taken to signify. The double sense of the words is all the more significant for the unconsciousness with which it is passed over.

THE HOMERIC DEITY AND THE PALL MALL GAZETTE  
(I. 82).

A writer in the *Pall Mall Gazette* (I think in 1874 or 1875, and in the autumn months, but I cannot now remember) summed up Homer's conception of a god as that of a "superlatively strong, amorous, beautiful, brave and cunning man." This is pretty much what a good working god ought to be, but he should also be kind and have a strong sense of humour. After having said the above the writer in the *Pall Mall Gazette* goes on, "An impartial critic can judge for himself how far, if at all, this is elevated above the level of mere fetish worship." Perhaps it is that I am not an impartial critic, but, if I am allowed to be so, I should say that the elevation above mere fetish worship was very considerable.

GOD AND MAN.

An honest god 's the noblest work of man.

SWELLS (I. 26).

People ask complainingly what swells have done, or do, for society that they should be able to live without working. The good swell is the creature towards which all nature has been groaning and travailing together until now. He is an ideal. He shows what may be done in the way of good breeding, health, looks, temper and fortune. He realises

men's dreams of themselves, at any rate vicariously. He preaches the gospel of grace. The world is like a spoilt child, it has this good thing given it at great expense and then says it is useless.

#### ON BEING A SWELL ALL ROUND (I. 61).

I have never in my life succeeded in being this. Sometimes I get a new suit and am tidy for a while in part, meanwhile the hat, tie, boots, gloves and underclothing all clamour for attention, and, before I have got them all well in hand, the new suit has lost its freshness. Still, if ever I do get any money, I will try and make myself really spruce all round for about a week, till I have found out, as I probably shall, that if I give my clothes an inch they will take an ell. [1880.]

#### MONEY (I. 60)

is the last enemy that shall never be subdued. While there is flesh there is money—or the want of money ; but money is always on the brain so long as there is a brain in reasonable order.

#### EXTREMES MEET (I. 120).

To be poor is to be contemptible, to be very poor is worse still, and so on, but to be actually at the point of death through poverty is to be sublime. So “when weakness is utter, honour ceaseth.”

#### DEATH (I. 166)

in anything like luxury is one of the most expensive things a man can indulge himself in. It costs a lot of money to die comfortably, unless one goes off pretty quickly.

## MONEY, HEALTH AND REPUTATION (I. 94, II. 99).

Money, if it live at all, that is to say, if it be reproductive and put out at any interest, however low, is mortal and doomed to be lost one day, though it may go on living through many generations of one single family if it be taken care of. No man is absolutely safe. It may be said to any man, "Thou fool, this night thy money shall be required of thee." And reputation is like money : it may be required of us without warning. The little unsuspected evil on which we trip may swell up in a moment and prove to be the huge, Janus-like mountain of unpardonable sin. And his health may be required of any fool, any night or any day.

A man will feel loss of money more keenly than loss of bodily health, so long as he can keep his money. Take his money away and deprive him of the means of earning any more and his health will soon break up ; but leave him his money, and, even though his health breaks up and he dies, he does not mind it so much as we think. Money losses are the worst, loss of health is next worst, and loss of reputation comes in a bad third. All other things are amusements, provided money, health and good name are untouched.

## SOLICITORS (I. 35, 150 ; II. 4).

A man must not think he can save himself the trouble of being a sensible man and a gentleman by going to his solicitor any more than he can get himself a sound constitution by going to his doctor ; but a solicitor can do more to keep a tolerably well-meaning fool straight than a doctor can do for an invalid. Money is to the solicitor what souls are to the parson or life to the physician. He is our money-doctor.

## DOCTORS (II. 2).

Going to your doctor is having such a row with your cells that you refer them to your solicitor. Sometimes you, as it were, strike against them and stop their food, when they go on strike against yourself. Sometimes you file a bill in Chancery against them and go to bed.

## PRIESTS (I. 136).

We may find an argument in favour of priests if we consider whether man is capable of doing for himself in respect of his moral and spiritual welfare (than which nothing can be more difficult and intricate) what it is so clearly better for him to leave to professional advisers in the case of his money and his body which are comparatively simple and unimportant.

## ITALIANS AND ENGLISHMEN (I. 43).

Italians, and perhaps Frenchmen, consider first whether they like or want to do a thing and then whether, on the whole, it will do them any harm. Englishmen, and perhaps Germans, consider first whether they ought to like a thing and often never reach the questions whether they do like it and whether it will hurt. There is much to be said for both systems, but I suppose it is best to combine them as far as possible.

ON KNOWING WHAT GIVES US PLEASURE (I. 80, 95, 96,  
133, 223; II. 6, 29, 43, 79).

One can bring no greater reproach against a man than to say that he does not set sufficient value upon pleasure, and there is no greater sign of a fool than the thinking that he can tell at once and easily what it is that pleases him. To know this is not easy, and how to extend our knowledge

of it is the highest and the most neglected of all arts and branches of education. Indeed, if we could master it and solve the difficulty of knowing what gives us pleasure, find its springs, its inception and earliest *modus operandi*, we should have discovered the secret of life and development, for the same difficulty has attended the development of every sense from touch onwards, and no new sense was ever developed without pains. A man had better stick to known and proved pleasures, but, if he will venture in quest of new ones, he should not do so with a light heart.

One reason why we find it so hard to know our own likings is because we are so little accustomed to try ; we have our likings found for us in respect of by far the greater number of the matters that concern us : thus we have grown all our limbs on the strength of the likings of our ancestors and adopt these without question.

Another reason is that, except in mere matters of eating and drinking, people do not realise the importance of finding out what it is that gives them pleasure if, that is to say, they would make themselves as comfortable here as they reasonably can. Very few, however, seem to care greatly whether they are comfortable or no. There are some men, so ignorant and careless of what gives them pleasure, that they cannot be said ever to have been really born as living beings at all. They present some of the phenomena of having been born ; they reproduce, in fact, so many of the ideas which we associate with having been born that it is hard not to think of them as living beings—but in spite of all appearances the central idea is wanting. At least one half of the misery which meets us daily might be removed or, at any rate, greatly alleviated, if those who suffer by it would think it worth their while to be at any pains to get rid of it. That they do not so think is proof that they neither know, nor care to know, more than in a very languid way, what it is that will relieve them most effectually, or, in other words, that the shoe does not really

pinch them so hard as we think it does. For when it really pinches, as when a man is being flogged, he will seek relief by any means in his power. So my great namesake said, "Surely the pleasure is as great of being cheated as to cheat"; and so, again, I remember to have seen a poem many years ago in *Punch*, according to which a certain young lady, being discontented at home, went out into the world in quest to "Some burden make or burden bear, but which she did not greatly care—Oh Misere!" So long as there was discomfort somewhere it was all right.

To those, however, who are desirous of knowing what gives them pleasure but do not quite know how to set about it I have no better advice to give than that they must take the same pains about acquiring this difficult art as about any other, and must acquire it in the same way—that is by attending to one thing at a time and not being in too great a hurry. Proficiency is not to be attained here, any more than elsewhere, by short cuts or by getting other people to do work that no other than oneself can do. Above all things it is necessary here, as in all other branches of study, not to think we know a thing before we do know it—to make sure of our ground and be quite certain that we really do like a thing before we say we do. When you cannot decide whether you like a thing or not, nothing is easier than to say so and to hang it up among the uncertainties. Or when you know you do not know and are in such doubt as to see no chance of deciding, then you may take one side or the other provisionally and throw yourself into it. This will sometimes make you uncomfortable, and you will feel you have taken the wrong side and thus learn that the other was the right one. Sometimes you will feel you have done right. Any way ere long you will know more about it. But there must have been a secret treaty with yourself to the effect that the decision was provisional only. For after all, the most important first principle in this matter is the not lightly thinking you know what you like

till you have made sure of your ground. I was nearly forty before I felt how stupid it was to pretend to know things that I did not know, and I still often catch myself doing so. Not one of my school-masters taught me this, but altogether otherwise.

#### SCHUMANN'S MUSIC (I. 81).

I should like to like it better than I do ; I dare say I could make myself like it better if I tried ; but I do not like having to try to make myself like things ; I like things that make me like them at once and no trying at all.

#### THE TEST OF MUSIC (IV. 78).

To know whether you are enjoying a piece of music or not you must see whether you find yourself looking at the advertisements of Pears' soap at the end of the programme.

#### ASSOCIATED IDEAS (I. 178).

When we are impressed by a few only, or perhaps only one of a number of ideas which are bonded pleasantly together, there is hope ; when we see a good many there is expectation ; when we have had so many presented to us that we have expected confidently, and the remaining ideas have not turned up, there is disappointment. So the sailor says in the play, "Here are my arms, here is my manly bosom, but where's my Mary ?"

#### IMAGINATION (I. 134).

I read once of a man who was cured of a dangerous illness by eating his doctor's prescription, which he understood was the medicine itself. So William Sefton Moorhouse [in New Zealand] imagined he was being converted

to Christianity by reading Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* which he had got by mistake for Butler's *Analogy* on the recommendation of a friend. But it puzzled him a good deal.

#### IMAGINATION (I. 215).

At Ivy Hatch, while we were getting our beer in the inner parlour, there was a confused *mélée* of voices in the bar amid which I distinguished a voice saying, "Imagination will do any b—— thing almost." I was writing *Life and Habit* at the time and was much tempted to put this passage in. Nothing truer has ever been said about imagination. Then the voice was heard addressing the barman and saying, "I suppose you wouldn't trust me with a quart of beer, would you ?"

#### SORROW WITHIN SORROW (III. 43).

He was in reality d——d glad : he told people he was sorry he was not more sorry, and here began the first genuine sorrow, for he was really sorry that people would not believe he was sorry that he was not more sorry.

#### WHERE TO SETTLE (III. 44).

His wife was ill and he was talking about her. "I think," he said, "supposing anything were to happen to either of us—well, do you know?—I think I should settle in Paris."

#### SPIRITUALISM (II. 226).

"Promise me solemnly," I said to her as she lay on what I believed to be her death-bed, "if you find in the world beyond the grave that you can communicate with me—that there is some way in which you can make me

aware of your continued existence—promise me solemnly that you will not avail yourself of it." She recovered, and never, never forgave me.

#### A LADY CRITIC (I. 133, 135).

A lady I meet frequently in the British Museum reading-room and elsewhere said to me the other day, "Why don't you write another *Erewhon*?" "Why, my dear lady," I replied, "*Life and Habit* was another *Erewhon*." They say these things to me continually to plague me and make out that I could do one good book but never any more. She is the sort of person who if she had known Shakespeare would have said to him when he wrote *Henry the IVth*, "Ah, Mr. Shakespeare, why don't you write us another *Titus Andronicus*?" Now that was a sweet play, that was." And when he had done *Antony and Cleopatra* she would say that her favourite plays were the three *Henry the VIths*.

#### WOMAN SUFFRAGE (II. 170).

I will vote for it when women have left off making a noise in the reading-room of the British Museum—when they leave off wearing high head-dresses in the pit of a theatre, and when I have seen as many as twelve women in all catch hold of the strap or bar on getting into an omnibus.

#### MANNERS MAKYTH MAN (II. 97).

Yes, but they make woman still more.

#### TRAGIC EXPRESSION (II. 2).

The three occasions when I have seen a really tragic expression upon a face were as follows:—

- (1) When Mrs. Inglis in my room at Montreal heard

my sausages frying, as she thought, too furiously in the kitchen she left me hurriedly with a glance, and the folds of her dress as she swept out of the room were Niobean.

(2) I saw a certain lady at dinner with a tureen of soup before her and also a plate of the same to which she had just helped herself. There was meat in the soup, and I suppose she got a bit she did not like ; instead of leaving it, she swiftly, stealthily, picked it up from her plate when she thought no one was looking and, with an expression which Mrs. Siddons might have studied for a performance of Clytemnestra, popped it back into the tureen. I have rarely seen such a look upon any one's face.

(3) I saw an alarm of fire on an emigrant ship in mid-ocean when I was going to New Zealand, and the women rushed aft with faces as in a Massacre of the Innocents.

#### MEMNON (I. 40).

I saw the driver of the Hampstead 'bus once, near St. Giles's Church—an old, fat, red-faced man, sitting bolt upright on the top of his 'bus in a driving storm of snow, fast asleep with a huge waterproof over his great-coat that descended with sweeping lines on to a tarpaulin. All this rose out of a cloud of steam from the horses. He had a short clay pipe in his mouth, but, for a moment, he looked just like Memnon.

#### MANZI THE MODEL (I. 99).

They had promised him sittings at the Royal Academy and then refused him on the ground that his legs were too hairy. He complained to Gogin : "Why," said he, "I sat at the Slade School for the figure only last week, and there were five ladies but not one of them told me my legs were too hairy."

## A SAILOR BOY AND SOME CHICKENS (II. 3).

A pretty girl in the train had some chirping chickens about ten days old in a box labelled "German egg powders. One packet equal to six eggs." A sailor boy got in at Basingstoke, a quiet, reserved youth, well behaved and unusually good-looking. By and by the chickens were taken out of the box and fed with biscuit on the carriage seat. This thawed the boy, who, though he fought against it for some time, yielded to irresistible fascination and said, "What are they?" "Chickens," said the girl. "Will they grow bigger?" "Yes." Then the boy said with an expression of infinite wonder, "And did you hatch them from they powders?" We all laughed, till the boy blushed and I was very sorry for him. If we had said they had been hatched from the powders he would have certainly believed us.

GOGIN, THE JAPANESE GENTLEMAN AND THE DEAD DOG  
(I. 128).

Gogin was one day going down Cleveland Street and saw an old, lean, careworn man crying over the body of his dog which had been just run over and killed by the old man's own cart. I have no doubt it was the dog's fault, for the man was in great distress; as for the dog there it lay all swelled and livid where the wheel had gone over it, its eyes protruded from their sockets and its tongue lolled out, but it was dead. The old man gazed on it, helplessly weeping, for some time, and then got a large piece of brown paper in which he wrapped up the body of his favourite; he tied it neatly with a piece of string and, placing it in his cart, went homeward with a heavy heart. The day was dull, the gutters were full of cabbage stalks, and the air resounded with the cry of costermongers.

On this a Japanese gentleman, who had watched the

scene, lifted up his voice and made the bystanders a se oration. He was very yellow, had long black hair, gold spectacles and a top hat ; he was a typical Japanese but he spoke English perfectly. He said the scene they had all just witnessed was a very sad one, and that it ought not to be passed over entirely without comment. He explained that it was very nice of the good old man to be so sorry about his dog and to be so careful of its remains, and that he and all the bystanders must sympathise with him in his grief, and to the expression of their sympathy, both with the man and with the poor dog, he had thought fit, with all respect, to make them his present speech.

I have not the man's words, but Gogin said they were like a Japanese drawing, that is to say, wonderfully charming, and showing great knowledge but not done in the least after the manner in which a European would do them. The bystanders stood open-mouthed and could make nothing of it, but they liked it, and the Japanese gentleman liked addressing them. When he left off and went away they followed him with their eyes, speechless.

*(To be continued.)*

THE NOTE-BOOKS  
OF  
SAMUEL BUTLER

AUTHOR OF *EREWHON*

(By permission of his Literary Executor, Mr. R. A. STREATFIELD.

II.

I found insufficient to deter me. I attacked people who were at once unscrupulous and powerful, and I made no alliances. I did this because I did not want to be bored and have my time wasted and my pleasures curtailed. I had money enough to live on, and preferred addressing myself to posterity rather than to any except a very few of my own contemporaries. Those few I have always kept well in mind. I think of them continually when in doubt about any passage, but beyond those few I will not go. Posterity will give a man a fair hearing ; his own times will not do so if he is attacking vested interests, and I have attacked two powerful sets of vested interests at once. [The Church and Science.] What is the good of addressing people who will not listen ? I have addressed the next generation, and have therefore said many things which want time before they become palatable. Any man who wishes his work to stand will sacrifice a good deal of his immediate audience for the sake of being attractive to a much larger number of people later on. He cannot gain this later audience unless he has been fearless and thorough-going, and if he is this he is sure to have to tread on the corns of a great many of those who live at the same time with him, however little he may wish to do so. He must not expect these people to help him on, nor wonder if, for a time, they succeed in snuffing him out. It is part of the swim that it should be so ; only, as one who believes himself to have practised what he preaches, let me assure the reader that to write for posterity and not get paid for it (if you have money of your own to live on) is much better fun than I can imagine it being to write like, we will say, George Eliot, and make a lot of money [1883].

#### DRAGONS (I. 39).

People say that there are neither dragons to be killed nor distressed maidens to be rescued now-a-days. I do

not know, but I think I have dropped across one or two, nor do I feel sure whether the most mortal wounds have been inflicted by the dragons or by myself.

#### THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES (II. 211).

'There is only one thing vainer and that is the having no wishes.

#### THE RULES OF LIFE (III. 70).

There are two great rules of life, the one general and the other particular. The first is that every one can, in the end, get what he wants if he only tries. This is the general rule. The particular rule is that every individual is more or less an exception to the general rule.

#### TOOLS (II. 16).

A tool is anything whatsoever which is used by an intelligent being for realising its object. The idea of a desired end is inseparable from a tool. The very essence of a tool is the being an instrument for the achievement of a purpose. We say that a man is the tool of another, meaning that he is being used for the furtherance of that other's ends, and this constitutes him a machine in use. Therefore the word "tool" implies also the existence of a living, intelligent being capable of desiring the end for which the tool is used, for this is involved in the idea of a desired end. And as few tools grow naturally fit for use (for even a stick or a fuller's teasel must be cut from their places and modified to some extent before they can be called tools), the word "tool" implies not only a purpose and a purposer, but a purposer who can see in what manner his purpose can be achieved, and who can contrive (or find ready made and fetch and employ) the tool which shall achieve it.

Strictly speaking, nothing is a tool unless during actual use. Nevertheless, if a thing has been made for the express purpose of being used as a tool it is commonly called a tool, whether it is in actual use or no. Thus hammers, chisels, etc., are called tools, though lying idle in a tool-box. What is meant is that, though not actually being used as instruments at the present moment, they bear the impress of their object, and are so often in use that we may speak of them as though they always were so. Strictly, a thing is a tool or not a tool just as it may happen to be in use or not. Thus a stone may be picked up and used to hammer a nail with, but the stone is not a tool until picked up with an eye to use: it is a tool as soon as this happens, and, if thrown away immediately the nail has been driven home, the stone is a tool no longer. We see, therefore, matter alternating between a toolish or organic state and an untoolish or inorganic. Where there is intention it is organic, where is no intention it is inorganic. Perhaps, however, the word "tool" should cover also the remains of a tool so long as there are manifest signs that the object was a tool once.

The simplest tool I can think of is a piece of gravel used for making a road. Nothing is done to it, it owes its being a tool simply to the fact that it subserves a purpose. A broken piece of granite used for macadamising a road is a more complex instrument, about the toolishness of which no doubt can be entertained. It will, however, I think, be held that even a piece of gravel found *in situ* and left there untouched, provided it is so left because it was deemed suitable for a road which was designed to pass over the spot, would become a tool in virtue of the recognition of its utility, while a similar piece of gravel a yard off on either side the proposed road would not be a tool.

The essence of a tool, therefore, lies in something outside the tool itself. It is not in the head of the hammer, nor in the handle, nor in the combination of the two that the essence of mechanical characteristics exists, but in the

recognition of its utility and in the forces directed through it in virtue of this recognition. This appears more plainly when we reflect that a very complex machine, if intended for use by children whose aim is not serious, ceases to rank in our minds as a tool, and becomes a toy. It is seriousness of aim and recognition of suitability for the achievement of that aim, and not anything in the tool itself, that makes the tool.

The goodness or badness, again, of a tool depends not upon anything within the tool as regarded without relation to the user, but upon the ease or difficulty experienced by the person using it in comparison with what he or others of average capacity would experience if they had used a tool of a different kind. Thus the same tool may be good for one man and bad for another.

It seems to me that all tools resolve themselves into the hammer and the lever, and that the lever is only an inverted hammer, or the hammer only an inverted lever, whichever one wills ; so that all the problems of mechanics are present to us in the simple stone which may be used as a hammer, or in the stick that may be used as a lever, as much as in the most complicated machine. These are the primordial cells of mechanics. And an organ is only another name for a tool.

#### ORGANS AND TOOLS (I. 110, 179, 200, 201).

A man should see himself as a kind of tool-box ; this is simple enough ; the difficulty is that it is the tools themselves that make and work the tools. The skill which now guides our organs and us in arts and inventions was at one time exercised upon the invention of these very organs themselves. Tentative bankruptcy acts afford good illustrations of the manner in which organisms have been developed. The ligaments which bind the tendons of our

feet or the valves of our blood vessels are the ingenious enterprises of individual cells who saw a want, felt that they could supply it, and have thus won themselves a position among the old aristocracy of the body politic.

The most incorporate tool—as an eye or a tooth or the fist, when a blow is struck with it—has still something of the non-ego about it ; and in like manner such a tool as a locomotive engine, apparently entirely separated from the body, must still from time to time, as it were, kiss the soil of the human body and be handled, and thus become incorporate with man, if it is to remain in working order.

#### EVOLUTION AND SENSE OF CHANGE (I. 148).

The great principle that underlies evolution turns on the desires of the animals that vary.

The great principles that underlie these desires turn mainly upon food, reproduction and self-defence.

What is the principle that underlies these three principles ? Dislike of change, tempered by desire for change.

Under this there lies continued sense of identity for which some change is necessary (inasmuch as without sense of change there is no sense of identity, nor indeed any sense at all), and under this again memory. Beyond which I cannot go.

#### MY BOOKS (III. 39).

I never make them : they grow ; they come to me and insist on being written, and on being such and such. I did not want to write *Erewhon*, I wanted to go on painting, and found it an abominable nuisance being dragged willy-nilly into writing it. So with all my books—the subjects were never of my own choosing ; they pressed themselves

upon me with more force than I could resist. If I had not liked the subjects I should have kicked, and nothing would have got me to do them at all. As I did like the subjects and the books came and said they were to be written, I grumbled a little and wrote them.

#### REPRODUCTION (I. 62).

Its base must be looked for not in the desire of the parents to reproduce, but in the discontent of the germs with their surroundings inside those parents, and a desire on their part to have a separate maintenance.

#### IS LIFE WORTH LIVING? (I. 213).

This is a question for an embryo, not for a man.

#### BOOKS AND CHILDREN (V. 49).

If the literary offspring is not to die young, almost as much trouble must be taken with it as with the bringing up of a physical child. Still, the physical child is the harder work of the two.

#### THE LIFE OF BOOKS (IV. 80).

Some writers think about the life of books as some savages think about the life of men—that there are books which never die. They all die sooner or later; but that will not hinder an author from trying to give his book as long a life as he can get for it. The fact that it will have to die is no valid reason for letting it die sooner than can be helped.

## THREE SONNETS (V. 197).

## I

Who paints a picture, writes a play or book  
 Which others read while he's asleep in bed  
 O' the other side of the world—when they o'erlook  
 His page the sleeper might as well be dead ;  
 What knows he of his distant unfelt life ?  
 What knows he of the thoughts his thoughts are raising,  
 The life his life is giving, or the strife  
 Concerning him—some cavilling, some praising ?  
 Yet which is most alive, he who's asleep  
 Or his quick spirit in some other place,  
 Or score of other places, that doth keep  
 Attention fixed and sleep from others chase ?  
 Which is the “he”—the “he” that sleeps, or “he”  
 That his own “he” can neither feel nor see ?

## II

What is't to live, if not to pull the strings  
 Of thought that pull those grosser strings whereby  
 We pull our limbs to pull material things  
 Into such shape as in our thoughts doth lie ?  
 Who pulls the strings that pull an agent's hand,  
 The action's counted his, so, we being gone,  
 The deeds that others do by our command,  
 Albeit we know them not, are still our own.  
 He lives who does, and he who does still lives,  
 Whether he wots of his own deeds or no.  
 Who knows the beating of his heart, that drives  
 Blood to each part, or how his limbs did grow ?  
 If life be naught but knowing, then each breath  
 We draw unheeded must be reckon'd death.

## III

“Men's work we have,” quoth one, “but we want them,  
 Them, palpable to touch and clear to view.”  
 Is it so nothing, then, to have the gem  
 But we must weep to have the setting too ?

Body is a chest wherein the tools abide  
With which the craftsman works as best he can  
And, as the chest the tools within doth hide,  
So doth the body crib and hide the man.  
Nay, though great Shakespeare stood in flesh before us,  
Should heaven on importunity release him,  
Is it so certain that he might not bore us,  
So sure but we ourselves might fail to please him ?  
Who prays to have the moon full soon would pray,  
Once it were his, to have it taken away.

#### THE ART OF PROPAGATING OPINION (I. 47).

He who would propagate an opinion must begin by making sure of his ground and holding it firmly. There is as little use in trying to breed from weak opinions as from other weak stock, animal or vegetable.

The more securely a man holds an opinion, the more temperate he can afford to be, and the more temperate he is, the more weight he will carry with those who are in the long run weightiest. Ideas and opinions, like living organisms, have a normal rate of growth which cannot be either checked or forced beyond a certain point. They can be held in check more safely than they can be hurried. They can also be killed ; and one of the surest ways to kill them is to try to hurry them.

The more unpopular an opinion is, the more necessary is it that the holder should be somewhat punctilious in his observance of conventionalities generally, and that, if possible, he should get the reputation of being well-to-do in the world.

Arguments are not so good as assertion. Arguments are like fire-arms which a man may keep at home but should not carry about with him. Indirect assertion, leaving the hearer to point the inference, is, as a rule, to be preferred. The one great argument with most people is that another should think this or that. The reasons of

the belief are details and, in nine cases out of ten, best omitted as confusing and weakening the general impression.

Many, if not most, good ideas die young—mainly from neglect on the part of the parents, but sometimes from over-fondness. Once well started, an opinion had better be left to shift for itself.

Insist as far as possible on the insignificance of the points of difference as compared with the resemblances to opinions generally accepted.

#### GLADSTONE AS A FINANCIER (I. 64).

I said to my tobacconist that Gladstone was not a financier because he bought a lot of china at high prices and it fetched very little when it was sold at Christie's.

"Did he give high prices?" said the tobacconist.

"Enormous prices," said I emphatically.

Now, to tell the truth, I did not know whether Mr. Gladstone had ever bought the china at all, much less what he gave for it, if he did; he may have had it all left him for aught I knew. But I was going to appeal to my tobacconist by arguments that he could understand, and I could see that he was much impressed.

#### STYLE (V. 149).

I never knew a writer yet who took the smallest pains with his style and was at the same time readable. Plato's having had seventy shies at one sentence is quite enough to explain to me why I dislike him. A man may and ought to take a great deal of pains to write clearly, tersely and euphemistically: he will write many a sentence three or four times over—to do much more than this is worse than not re-writing at all; he will be at great pains to see that he does not repeat himself, to arrange his matter in the way

that shall best enable the reader to master it, to cut out superfluous words and, even more, to eschew irrelevant matter; but in each case he will be thinking not of his own style but of his reader's convenience.

Men like Newman and R. L. Stevenson seem to have taken pains to acquire what they called a style as a preliminary measure—as something that they had to form before their writings could be of any value. I should like to put it on record that I never took the smallest pains with my style, have never thought about it, and do not know or want to know whether it is a style at all or whether it is not, as I believe and hope, just common, simple straightforwardness. I cannot conceive how any man can take thought for his style without loss to himself and his readers.

I have, however, taken all the pains that I had patience to endure in the improvement of my handwriting (which, by the way, has a constant tendency to resume feral characteristics) and also with my MS. generally to keep it clean and legible. I am having a great tidying just now, in the course of which the MS. of *Erewhon* turned up, and I was struck with the great difference between it and the MS. of *The Authoress of the Odyssey*. I have also taken great pains, with what success I know not, to correct impatience, irritability and other like faults in my own character—and this not because I care two straws about my own character, but because I find the correction of such faults as I have been able to correct makes life easier and saves me from getting into scrapes, and attaches nice people to me more readily. But I suppose this really is attending to style after all [1897].

#### RELATIVE IMPORTANCES (I. 51 ; II. 15).

It is the painter's business to help memory and imagination, not to supersede them. He cannot put the whole before the spectator, nothing can do this short of the thing

considerations insisted on above, we feel as though we were with a troublesome cicerone who will not let us look at things with our own eyes, but keeps intruding himself at every touch and turn, and trying to exercise that undue influence upon us which generally proves to have been the accompaniment to concealment and fraud. This is exactly what we feel with Van Mieris and, though in a less degree, with Gerard Dow ; whereas with Jean Van Eyck and Metsu, no matter how far they may have gone, we find them essentially as impressionist as Rembrandt or Velasquez.

For impressionism only means that due attention has been paid to the relative importances of the impressions made by the various characteristics of a given subject, and that they have been presented to us in order of precedence.

#### EATING GRAPES DOWNWARDS (I. 40, 212).

Always eat grapes downwards—that is, always eat the best grapes first ; in this way there will be none better left on the bunch, and each grape will seem good down to the last. If you eat the other way, you will not have a good grape in the lot. Besides, you will be tempting Providence to kill you before you come to the best. This is why autumn seems better than spring : in the autumn we are eating our days downwards ; in the spring each day still seems “very bad.” People should live on this principle more than they do, but they do live on it a good deal; from the age of, say, fifty we eat our days downwards.

In New Zealand for a long time I had to do the washing-up after each meal. I used to do the knives first, for it might please God to take me before I came to the forks, and then what a sell it would have been to have done the forks rather than the knives !

## THE SENSE OF TOUCH (I. 139, 218; II. 30).

All the senses resolve themselves ultimately into a sense of touch, and eating is touch carried to the bitter end. So there is but one sense—touch—and the amœba has it. When I look upon the foramenifera I look upon myself.

EATING AND PROSELYTISING (I. 57, 131, 158, 161, 229;  
II. 130).

All eating is a kind of proselytising—a kind of dogmatising—a maintaining that the eater's way of looking at things is better than the eatee's. We convert the food, or try to do so, to our own way of thinking, and when it sticks to its own opinion and refuses to be converted, we say it disagrees with us. An animal that refuses to let another eat it has the courage of its convictions and, if it gets eaten, dies a martyr to them. So we can only proselytise fresh meat, the convictions of putrid meat begin to be too strong for us.

It is good for a man that he should not be thwarted—that he should have his own way as far, and with as little difficulty, as possible. Cooking is good because it makes matters easier by unsettling the meat's mind and preparing it for new ideas. All food must first be prepared for us by animals and plants, or we cannot assimilate it; and so thoughts are more easily assimilated that have been already digested by other minds. A man should avoid converse with things that have been stunted or starved, and should not eat such meat as has been overdriven or underfed or afflicted with disease, nor should he touch fruit or vegetables that have not been well grown.

Sitting quiet after eating is akin to sitting still during divine service so as not to disturb the congregation. We

are catechising and converting our proselytes, and there should be no row. As we get older we must digest more quietly still.

### INDIGESTION (I. 121)

may be, as I have said above, due to the naughtiness of the stiff-necked things that we have eaten, or to the poverty of our own arguments; but it may also arise from an attempt on the part of the stomach to be too d——d clever, and to depart from precedent inconsiderately. The healthy stomach is nothing if not conservative. Few radicals have good digestions.

### ASSIMILATION AND PERSECUTION (I. 6, 193).

We cannot get out of persecution ; if we feel at all we must persecute something ; the mere acts of feeding and growing are acts of persecution. Our aim should be to persecute nothing but such things as are absolutely incapable of resisting us. Man is the only animal that can remain on friendly terms with the victims he intends to eat until he eats them.

### THE RIGHTEOUS MAN.

#### I

The righteous man will rob none but the defenceless,  
Whatsoever can reckon with him he will neither plunder nor kill ;  
He will steal an egg from a hen or a lamb from an ewe,  
For his sheep and his hens cannot reckon with him hereafter—  
They live not in any odour of defencefulness :  
Therefore right is with the righteous man, and he taketh advantage right-eously,  
Praising God and plundering.

## II

The righteous man will enslave his horse and his dog,  
 Making them serve him for their bare keep and for nothing further,  
 Shooting them, selling them for vivisection when they can no longer profit  
     him,  
 Backbiting them and beating them if they fail to please him ;  
 For his horse and his dog can bring no action for damages,  
 Wherefore, then, should he not enslave them, shoot them, sell them for vivi-  
     section ?

## III

But the righteous man will not plunder the defenceful—  
 Not if he be alone and unarmed—for his conscience will smite him ;  
 He will not rob a she-bear of her cubs, nor an eagle of her eaglets—  
 Unless he have a rifle to purge him from the fear of sin :  
 Then may he shoot rejoicing in innocence—from ambush or a safe distance ;  
 Or he will beguile them, lay poison for them, keep no faith with them ;  
 For what faith is there with that which cannot reckon hereafter,  
 Neither by itself, nor by another, nor by any residuum of ill consequences ?  
 Surely, where weakness is utter, honour ceaseth.

## IV

Nay, I will do what is right in the eyes of him who can harm me,  
 And not in those of him who cannot call me to account.  
 Therefore yield me up thy pretty wings, O humming-bird !  
 Sing for me in a prison, O lark !  
 Pay me thy rent, O widow ! for it is mine.  
 Where there is reckoning there is sin,  
 And where there is no reckoning sin is not.

## A CLERGYMAN'S DOUBTS.

[Under this heading a correspondence appeared in the *Examiner*, 15th February to 14th June 1879. The first letter, written by Butler, purported to be by "An Earnest Clergyman" aged forty-five, with a wife, five children, a country living worth £400 a year and a house, but no private means. He had ceased to believe in the doctrines he was called upon to teach. Ought he to continue to lead a life that was a lie or ought he to throw up his orders and plunge himself, his wife and children into poverty ? The dilemma interested Butler deeply : he might so easily have found himself in it if he had not begun to doubt the efficacy of infant baptism when he did. Fifteen letters followed, signed "Cantab," "Oxoniensis," and so forth, some recommending one course, some another ; with the exception of

two or three, Butler wrote them all. One, signed "X. Y. Z.," included *The Righteous Man*, prefaced with a few words connecting it with the discussion. From the following letter, signed "Ethics," he afterwards took the two passages between asterisks and used them for the Dissertation on Lying in Chapter v. of *Alps and Sanctuaries*.—H. F. J.]

Sir : I am sorry for your correspondent "An Earnest Clergyman," for, though he may say he has "come to smile at his troubles," his smile seems to be a grim one. We must all of us eat a peck of moral dirt before we die, but some must know more precisely than others when they are eating it ; some, again, can bolt it without wry faces in one shape, while they cannot endure even the smell of it in another. "An Earnest Clergyman" admits that he is in the habit of telling people certain things which he does not believe, but says he has no great fancy for deceiving himself. "Cantab" must, I fear, deceive himself before he can tolerate the notion of deceiving other people. For my own part I prefer to be deceived by one who does not deceive himself rather than by one who does, for the first will know better when to stop, and will not commonly deceive me more than he can help. As for the other—if he does not know how to invest his own thoughts safely I will invest mine still worse ; he will hold God's most precious gift of falsehood too cheap ; he has come by it too easily ; cheaply come, cheaply go will be his maxim. The good liar should be the converse of the poet ; he should be made, not born.

It is not loss of confidence in a man's strict adherence to the letter of truth that shakes my confidence in him. I know what I do myself and that I must lose all social elasticity if I were not to do. \* Turning for moral guidance to my cousins the lower animals—whose unsophisticated instinct proclaims what God has taught them with a directness we may sometimes study—I find the plover lying when she reads us truly and, knowing that we shall hit her if we think her to be down, lures us from her young

ones under the fiction of a broken wing. Is God angry, think you, with this pretty deviation from the letter of strict accuracy? or was it not He who whispered to her to tell the falsehood, to tell it with a circumstance, without conscientious scruples, and not once only but to make a practice of it, so as to be an habitual liar for at least six weeks in the year? I imagine so. When I was young I used to read in good books that it was God who taught the bird to make her nest, and, if so, He probably taught each species the other domestic arrangements which should be best suited to it. Or did the nest-building information come from God and was there an Evil One among the birds also who taught them to steer clear of pedantry? Then there is the spider—an ugly creature, but I suppose God likes it—can anything be meaner than that web which naturalists extol as such a marvel of Providential ingenuity?

Ingenuity! The word reeks with lying. Once, on a summer afternoon, in a distant country I met one of those orchids whose main idea consists in the imitation of a fly; this lie they dispose so plausibly upon their petals that other flies which would steal their honey leave them unmolested. Watching intently and keeping very still, me thought I heard this person speaking to the offspring which she felt within her though I saw them not.

“My children,” she exclaimed, “I must soon leave you; think upon the fly, my loved ones; make it look as terrible as possible; cling to this thought in your passage through life, for it is the one thing needful; once lose sight of it and you are lost.”

Over and over again she sang this burden in a small, still voice, and so I left her. Then straightway I came upon some butterflies whose profession it was to pretend to believe in all manner of vital truths which in their inner practice they rejected; thus, pretending to be certain other and hateful butterflies which no bird will eat by reason of

their abominable smell, these cunning ones conceal their own sweetness, live long in the land and see good days. Think of that, O Earnest Clergyman, my friend ! No. Lying is like Nature, you may expel her with a fork, but she will always come back again. It is like the poor, we must have it always with us. The question is, How much, when, where, to whom and under what circumstances is lying right ? For, once admit that a plover may pretend to have a broken wing and yet be without sin if she have pretended well enough, and the thin edge of the wedge has been introduced so that there is no more saying that we must never lie.\*

It is not, then, the discovery that a man has the power to lie that shakes my confidence in him ; it is loss of confidence in his mendacity that I find it impossible to get over. I forgive him for telling me lies, but I cannot forgive him for not telling me the same lies, or nearly so, about the same things. This shows he has a slipshod memory, which is unpardonable, or else that he tells so many lies that he finds it impossible to remember all of them, and this is like having too many of the poor always with us. The plover and the spider have each of them their stock of half-a-dozen lies or so which we may expect them to tell when occasion arises ; they are plausible and consistent, but we know where to have them ; otherwise, if they were liable, like self-deceivers, to spring mines upon us in unexpected places, man would soon make it his business to reform them—not from within, but from without.

And now it is time I came to the drift of my letter, which is that if "An Earnest Clergyman" has not cheated himself into thinking he is telling the truth, he will do no great harm by stopping where he is. Do not let him make too much fuss about trifles. The solemnity of the truths which he professes to uphold is very doubtful ; there is a tacit consent that it exists more on paper than in reality.

If he is a man of any tact, he can say all he is compelled to say and do all the Church requires of him—like a gentleman, with neither undue slovenliness nor undue unctious—yet it shall be perfectly plain to all his parishioners who are worth considering that he is acting as a mouthpiece and that his words are spoken dramatically. As for the unimaginative, they are as children ; they cannot and should not be taken into account. Men must live as they must write or act—for a certain average standard which each must guess at for himself as best he can ; those who are above this standard he cannot reach ; those, again, who are below it must be so at their own risk.

Pilate did well when he would not stay for an answer to his question, What is Truth ? for there is no such thing apart from the sayer and the sayee. \* There is that irony in Nature which brings it to pass that if the sayer be a man with any stuff in him, provided he tells no lies wittingly to himself and is never unkindly, he may lie and lie and lie all the day long, and he will no more be false to any man than the sun will shine by night. His lies will become truths as they pass into the hearer's soul. But if a man deceives himself and is unkind, the truth is not in him, it turns to falsehood while yet in his mouth, like the quails in the Wilderness of Sinai. How this is so or why, I know not, but that the Lord hath mercy on whom He will have mercy and whom He willeth He hardeneth, and that the bad man can do no right and the good no wrong.\*

A great French writer has said that the mainspring of our existence does not lie in those veins and nerves and arteries which have been described with so much care—these are but its masks and mouthpieces through which it acts but behind which it is for ever hidden ; so in like manner the faiths and formulæ of a Church may be as its bones and animal mechanism, but they are not the life of the Church, which is something rather that cannot be

holden in words, and one should know how to put them off, yet put them off gracefully, if they wish to come too prominently forward. Do not let "An Earnest Clergyman" take things too much *au sérieux*. He seems to be fairly contented where he is ; let him take the word of one who is old enough to be his father, that if he has a talent for conscientious scruples he will find plenty of scope for them in other professions as well as in the Church. I, for aught he knows, may be a doctor and I might tell my own story ; or I may be a barrister and have found it my duty to win a case which I thought a very poor one, whereby others, whose circumstances were sufficiently pitiable, lost their all ; yet doctors and barristers do not write to the newspapers to air their poor consciences in broad daylight. Why should An Earnest (I hate the word) Clergyman do so ? Let me give him a last word or two of fatherly advice.

Men may settle small things for themselves—as what they will have for dinner or where they will spend the vacation—but the great ones—such as the choice of a profession, of the part of England they will live in, whether they will marry or no—they had better leave the force of circumstances to settle for them ; if they prefer the phraseology, as I do myself, let them leave these matters to God. When He has arranged things for them, do not let them be in too great a hurry to upset His arrangement in a tiff. If they do not like their present and another opening suggests itself easily and naturally, let them take that as a sign that they make a change ; otherwise, let them see to it that they do not leave the frying-pan for the fire. A man, finding himself in the field of a profession, should do as cows do when they are put into a field of grass. They do not like any field ; they like the open prairie of their ancestors. They walk, however, all round their new abode, surveying the hedges and gates with much interest. If there is a gap in any hedge they will

commonly go through it at once, otherwise they will resign themselves contentedly enough to the task of feeding.

I am, Sir,

One who thinks he knows a thing or two about

ETHICS.

### A FRIEND (I. 74)

who cannot at a pinch remember a thing or two that never happened is as bad as one who does not know how to forget.

### HOMER'S HOT AND COLD SPRINGS (III).

[The following extract is taken from a memorandum Butler made of a visit he paid to Greece and the Troad in the spring of 1895. In the *Iliad* (xxii. 145) Homer mentions hot and cold springs where the Trojan women used to wash their clothes. There are no such springs near Hissarlik, where they ought to be, but the American Consul at the Dardanelles told Butler there was something of the kind on Mount Ida, at the sources of the Scamander, and he determined to see them after visiting Hissarlik. He was provided with an interpreter, Yakoub, an attendant, Ahmed, an escort of one soldier, and a horse. He went first to the Consul's farm at Thymbra, about five miles from Hissarlik, where he spent the night and found it "all very like a first-class New Zealand sheep station." The next day he went to Hissarlik and saw no reason for disagreeing with the received opinion that it is the site of Troy. He then proceeded to Bunarbashi and so to Bairemitch, passing on the way a saw-mill where there was a Government official with twenty soldiers under him. This official was much interested in the traveller and directed his men to take carpets and a dish of trout, caught that morning in the Scamander, and carry them up to the hot and cold springs while he himself accompanied Butler. So they set off and the official, Ismail, showed him the way and pointed out the springs, and there is a long note about the hot and cold water.]

And now let me return to Ismail Gusbashi, the excellent Turkish official who, by the way, was with me during all my examination of the springs, and whose assurances of their twofold temperature I should have found it impossible to doubt, even though I had not caught one warmer cupful myself. His men, while we were at the springs, had spread a large Turkey carpet on the flower-bespangled

grass under the trees, and there were three smaller rugs at three of the corners. On these Ismail and Yakoub and I took our places. The other two were cross-legged, but I reclining anyhow. The sun shimmered through the spring foliage. I saw two hoopoes and many beautiful birds whose names I knew not. Through the trees I could see the snow-fields of Ida far above me, but it was hopeless to think of reaching them. The soldiers and Ahmed cooked the trout and the eggs all together ; then we had boiled eggs, bread and cheese, and, of course, more lamb's liver done on skewers like cats' meat. I ate with my pocket-knife, the others using their fingers in true Homeric fashion.

When we had "put from us the desire of meat and drink," Ismail began to talk to me. He said he had now for the first time in his life found himself in familiar conversation with Wisdom from the West (that was me), and that, as he greatly doubted whether such another opportunity would be ever vouchsafed to him, he should wish to consult me upon a matter which had greatly exercised him. He was now fifty years old and had never married. Sometimes he thought he had done a wise thing, and sometimes it seemed to him that he had been very foolish. Would I kindly tell him which it was and advise him as to the future ? I said he was addressing one who was in much the same condition as himself, only that I was some ten years older. We had a saying in England that if a man marries he will regret it, and that if he does not marry he will regret it.

"Ah !" said Ismail, who was leaning towards me and trying to catch every word I spoke, though he could not understand a syllable till Yakoub interpreted my Italian into Turkish ; "Ah !" he said, "that is a true word" (*una vera parola*).

In my younger days, I said (may Heaven forgive me !), I had been passionately in love with a very beautiful young

lady, but—and here my voice faltered, and I looked very sad, waiting for Yakoub to interpret what I had said—but it had been the will of Allah that she should marry another gentleman, and this had broken my heart for many years. After a time, however, I concluded that these things were all settled for us by a higher Power.

“Ah! that is a true word.”

“And so, my dear sir, in your case I should reflect that if Allah” (and I raised my hand to Heaven) “had desired your being married, he would have signified his will to you in some way that you could hardly mistake. As he does not appear to have done so, I should recommend you to remain single until you receive some distinct intimation that you are to marry.”

“Ah! that is a true word.”

“Besides,” I continued, “suppose you marry a woman with whom you think you are in love and then find out, after you have been married to her for three months, that you do not like her. This would be a very painful situation.”

“Ah! yes, indeed! that is a true word.”

“And if you had children who were good and dutiful, it would be delightful; but suppose they turned out disobedient and ungrateful—and I have known many such cases—could anything be more distressing to a parent in his declining years?”

“Ah! that is a true word that you have spoken.”

“We have a great Imaum,” I continued, “in England; he is called the Archbishop of Canterbury and gives answers to people who are in any kind of doubt or difficulty. I knew one gentleman who asked his advice upon the very question that you have done me the honour of propounding to myself.”

“Ah! and what was his answer?”

“He told him,” said I, “that it was cheaper to buy the milk than to keep a cow.”

"Ah ! Ah ! that is a most true word."

Here I closed the conversation, and we began packing up to make a start. When we were about to mount, I said to him, hat in hand :

"Sir, it occurs to me with great sadness that, though you will, no doubt, often re-visit this lovely spot, yet it is most certain that I shall never do so. Promise me that when you come here you will sometimes think of the stupid old Englishman who has had the pleasure of lunching with you to-day, and I promise that I will often think of you when I am at home again, in London."

He was much touched, and we started. After we had gone about a mile I suddenly missed my knife. I knew I should want it badly many a time before we got to the Dardanelles and I knew perfectly well where I should find it : so I stopped the cavalcade and said I must ride back for it. I did so, found it immediately and returned. Then I said to Ismail :

"Sir, I understand now why I was led to leave my knife behind me. I had said it was certain I should never see that enchanting spot again, but I spoke presumptuously, forgetting that if Allah" (and I raised my hand to Heaven) "willed it I should assuredly do so. I am corrected and with great leniency."

Ismail was much affected. He immediately took off his watch chain (happily of brass and of no intrinsic value) and gave it me, assuring me that it was given him by a very dear friend, that he had worn it for many years, and valued it greatly—would I keep it as a memorial of himself ? Fortunately I had with me a little silver match-box with my name engraved on it. I gave it to him, but had some difficulty in making him accept it. Then we rode on till we came to the saw-mills. I ordered two lambs for the ten soldiers who had accompanied us, having understood from Yakoub that this would be an acceptable present. And so I parted from this most kind and friendly gentle-

man with every warm expression of cordiality on both sides.

I sent him his photograph which I had taken, and I sent his soldiers their groups also—one for each man—and in due course I received the following letter of thanks. Alas ! I have never written in answer. I knew not how to do it. I knew, however, that I could not keep up a correspondence, even though I wrote once. But few unanswered letters more often rise up and smite me. How the Post Office people ever read "Bueter, Ciforzin St." into "Butler, Clifford's Inn" I cannot tell. What splendid emendators of a corrupt text they ought to make ! But I could almost wish that they had failed, for it has pained me not a little that I have not replied.

Mr. Samuel Bueter,  
No. 15 Ciforzin St. London, England.

Dardanelles,  
August 4/95.

Mr. Samuel. England.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Many thanks for the photograph you have send me. It was very kind of you to think of me to send me this token of your remembrance. I certainly appreciate it, and shall think of you whenever I look at it. Ah My Dear Brother, it is impossible for me to forget you, under favorable circumstance. I confess I must prefer you. I have a grate desire to have the beautifull chance to meet you. Ah then with the tears of gladness to be the result of the great love of our friendness A my Sir what pen can describe the meeting that shall be come with your second visit if it please God.

It is my pray to Our Lord God to protect you and to keep you glad and happy for ever.

Though we are far from each other yet we can speak with letters.

Thank God to have your love of friendness with me and mine with your noble person.

Hopeing to hear from you,

Yours truly,

ISMAYEL, from

Byramich hizar memuerue iuse bashi.

*(To be continued.)*

THE NOTE-BOOKS  
OF  
SAMUEL BUTLER

AUTHOR OF *EREWHON*

(By permission of his Literary Executor, Mr. R. A. STREATFIELD.)

III.



# THE NOTE-BOOKS OF SAMUEL BUTLER

## III

### FROM THE PREFACE TO VOL. II.

ON indexing this volume, as with Vols. I and IV which are already indexed and as, no doubt, will be the case with any that I may live to index later, I am alarmed at the triviality of many of these notes, the inaptitude of many and the obvious untenability of many that I should have done much better to destroy.

Elmsley, in one of his letters to Dr. Butler, says that an author is the worst person to put one of his own works through the press (*Life of Dr. Butler*, I. 88). It seems to me that he is the worst person also to make selections from his own notes or indeed even, in my case, to write them. I cannot help it. They grew as, with little disturbance, they now stand ; they are not meant for publication ; the bad ones serve as bread for the jam of the good ones ; it was less trouble to let them go than to think whether they ought not to be destroyed. The retort, however, is obvious ; no thinking should have been required in respect of many ; a glance should have consigned them to the waste-paper basket. I know it and I know that many a one of those who look over these books—for that they will be looked over by not a few I doubt not—will think me to have been a greater fool than I probably was. I cannot help it. I have at any rate the consolation of also knowing that, however much I may have irritated, displeased or disappointed

them, they will not be able to tell me so, and I think that, to some, such a record of passing moods and thoughts good, bad and indifferent will be more valuable as throwing light upon the period to which it relates than it would have been if it had been edited with greater judgment.

Besides, Vols. I and IV being already bound, I should not have enough to form Vols. II and III if I cut out all those that ought to be cut out [June 1898].

P.S.—If I had re-read my preface to Vol. IV, I need not have written the above.

#### TRÜBNER AND MYSELF (I. 159).

When I went back to Trübner, after Bogue had failed, I had a talk with him and his partner. I could see they had lost all faith in my literary prospects. Trübner told me I was a *homo unius libri*, meaning *Erewhon*. He said I was in a very solitary position. I replied that I knew I was, but it suited me. I said :

“I pay my way ; when I was with you before, I never owed you money ; you find me now not owing my publisher money, but my publisher in debt to me ; I never owe so much as a tailor’s bill ; beyond secured debts, I do not owe £5 in the world and never have” (which is quite true). “I get my summer’s holiday in Italy every year ; I live very quietly and cheaply, but it suits my health and tastes, and I have no acquaintances but those I value. My friends stick by me. If I was to get in with these literary and scientific people I should hate them and they me. I should fritter away my time and my freedom without getting a *quid pro quo* : as it is, I am free and I give the swells every now and then such a facer as they get from no one else. Of course I don’t expect to get on in a commercial sense at present, I do not go the right way to work for this ; but I am going the right way to secure a lasting reputation

and this is what I do care for. A man cannot have both, he must make up his mind which he means going in for ; I have gone in for posthumous fame and I see no step in my literary career which I do not think calculated to promote my being held in esteem when the heat of passion has subsided."

Trübner shrugged his shoulders. He plainly does not believe that I shall succeed in getting a hearing ; he thinks the combination of the religious and cultured world too strong for me to stand against. If he means that the reviewers will burke me as far as they can, no doubt he is right ; but when I am dead there will be other reviewers and I have already done enough to secure that they shall from time to time look me up. They won't bore me then but they will be just like the present ones [1882].

#### SQUARING ACCOUNTS (II. 97; III. 60, 72, 83).

We owe past generations not only for the master discoveries of music, science, literature and art—few of which brought profit to those to whom they were revealed—but also for our organism itself which is an inheritance gathered and garnered by those who have gone before us. What money have we paid not for Handel and Shakespeare only but for our eyes and ears ?

And so with regard to our contemporaries. A man is sometimes tempted to exclaim that he does not fare well at the hands of his own generation ; that, although he may play pretty assiduously, he is received with more hisses than applause ; that the public is hard to please, slow to praise, and bent on driving as hard a bargain as it can. This, however, is only what he should expect. No sensible man will suppose himself to be of so much importance that his contemporaries should be at much pains to get at the truth concerning him. As for my own position, if I say the

things I want to say, without troubling myself about the public, why should I grumble at the public for not troubling about me? Besides, not being paid myself, I can in better conscience use the works of others, as I daily do, without paying for them and without being at the trouble of praising or thanking them more than I have a mind to. And, after all, how can I say I am not paid? In addition to all that I inherit from past generations I receive from my own everything that makes life worth living—London, with its infinite sources of pleasure and amusement, good theatres, concerts, picture galleries, the British Museum Reading Room, newspapers, a comfortable dwelling, railways, and, above all, the society of the friends I value.

#### A DISAPPOINTING PERSON (II. 129).

I suspect I am rather a disappointing person, for every now and then there is a fuss and I am to meet some one who would very much like to make my acquaintance, or some one writes me a letter and says he has long admired my books and may he, etc. Of course I say, "Yes," but experience has taught me that it always ends in turning some one who was more or less inclined to run me into one who considers he has a grievance against me for not being a very different kind of person from what I am. These people, however (and this happens on an average once or twice a year), do not come solely to see me, they generally tell me all about themselves, and the impression is left upon me that they have really come in order to be praised. I am as civil to them as I know how to be but enthusiastic I never am, for they have never any of them been nice people, and it is my want of enthusiasm for themselves as much as anything else which disappoints them. They seldom come again. Mr. Alfred Tylor was the only acquaintance I have ever made through being sent for to be

looked at, or letting some one come to look at me, who turned out a valuable ally; but then he sent for me through mutual friends in the usual way.

#### ENTERTAINING ANGELS (I. 39).

I doubt whether any angel would find me very entertaining. As for myself, if ever I do entertain one it will have to be unawares. When people entertain others without an introduction they generally turn out more like devils than angels.

#### THE RETURN OF THE JEWS TO PALESTINE (I. 180; III. 42).

A man called on me last week and proposed gravely that I should write a book upon an idea which had occurred to a friend of his, a Jew living in New Bond Street. It was a plan requiring the co-operation of a brilliant writer and that was why he had come to me. If only I would help, the return of the Jews to Palestine would be rendered certain and easy. There was no trouble about the poor Jews, he knew how he could get them back at any time; the difficulty lay with the Rothschilds, Oppenheims, etc.; with my assistance, however, the thing could be done. I am afraid I was rude enough to decline to go into the scheme on the ground that I did not care twopence whether the Rothschilds and Oppenheims went back to Palestine or not. This was felt to be an obstacle; but then he began to try and make me care, whereupon, of course, I had to get rid of him [1883].

#### MATTHEW ARNOLD ON RIGHTEOUSNESS (I. 173).

According to Mr. Matthew Arnold, as we find the highest traditions of grace, beauty and the heroic virtues

among the Greeks and Romans, so we derive our highest ideal of righteousness from Jewish sources. Righteousness was to the Jew what strength and beauty were to the Greek or fortitude to the Roman.

This sounds well, but can we think that the Jews taken as a nation were really more righteous than the Greeks and Romans? Could they indeed be so if they were less strong, graceful and enduring? In some respects they may have been—every nation has its strong points—but surely there has been a nearly unanimous verdict for many generations that the typical Greek or Roman is a higher, nobler person than the typical Jew—and this referring not to the modern Jew, who may perhaps be held to have been injured by centuries of oppression, but to the Hebrew of the time of the old prophets and of the most prosperous eras in the history of the nation. If three men could be set before us as the most perfect Greek, Roman and Jew respectively, and if we could choose which we would have our only son most resemble, is it not likely we should find ourselves preferring the Greek or Roman to the Jew? And does not this involve that we hold the two former to be the more righteous in a broad sense of the word?

I dare not say that we owe no benefits to the Jewish nation, I do not feel sure whether we do or do not, but I can see no good thing that I can point to as a notoriously Hebrew contribution to our moral and intellectual well-being as I can point to our law and say that it is Roman, or to our fine arts and say that they are based on what the Greeks and Italians taught us. On the contrary, if asked what feature of post-Christian life we had derived most distinctly from Hebrew sources I should say at once “intolerance”—the desire to dogmatise about matters whereon the Greek and Roman held certainty to be at once unimportant and unattainable. This, with all its train of bloodshed and family disunion, is chargeable to the Jewish rather than to any other account.

There is yet another vice which occurs readily to any one who reckons up the characteristics which we derive mainly from the Jews ; it is one that we call, after a Jewish sect, "Pharisaism." I do not mean to say that no Greek or Roman was ever a sanctimonious hypocrite, still, sanctimoniousness does not readily enter into our notions of Greeks and Romans and it does so enter into our notions of the old Hebrews. Of course, we are all of us sanctimonious sometimes ; Horace himself is so when he talks about *aurum irreputum et sic melius situm*, and as for Virgil he was a prig, pure and simple ; still, on the whole, sanctimoniousness was not a Greek and Roman vice and it was a Hebrew one. True, they stoned their prophets freely ; but these are not the Hebrews to whom Mr. Arnold is referring, they are the ones whom it is the custom to leave out of sight and out of mind as far as possible, so that they should hardly count as Hebrews at all, and none of our characteristics should be ascribed to them.

Taking their literature I cannot see that it deserves the praises that have been lavished upon it. The *Song of Solomon* and the book of *Esther* are the most interesting in the Old Testament, but these are the very ones that make the smallest pretensions to holiness, and even these are neither of them of very transcendent merit. They would stand no chance of being accepted by Messrs. Cassell and Co. or by any biblical publisher of the present day. Chatto and Windus might take the *Song of Solomon*, but, with this exception, I doubt if there is a publisher in London who would give a guinea for the pair. *Ecclesiastes* contains some fine things but is strongly tinged with pessimism, cynicism and affectation. Some of the *Proverbs* are good, but not many of them are in common use. *Job* contains some fine passages, and so do some of the *Psalms* ; but the *Psalms* generally are poor and, for the most part, querulous, spiteful and introspective into the bargain.

Mudie would not take thirteen copies of the lot if they were to appear now for the first time—unless indeed their royal authorship were to arouse an adventitious interest in them, or unless the author were a rich man who played his cards judiciously with the reviewers. As for the prophets—we know what appears to have been the opinion formed concerning them by those who should have been best acquainted with them ; I am no judge as to the merits of the controversy between them and their fellow-countrymen, but I have read their works and am of opinion that they will not hold their own against such masterpieces of modern literature as, we will say, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Gulliver's Travels* or *Tom Jones*. “Whether there be prophecies,” exclaims the Apostle, “they shall fail.” On the whole I should say that Isaiah and Jeremiah must be held to have failed.

I would join issue with Mr. Matthew Arnold on yet another point. I understand him to imply that righteousness should be a man's highest aim in life. I do not like setting up righteousness, nor yet anything else, as the highest aim in life ; a man should have any number of little aims about which he should be conscious and for which he should have names, but he should have neither name for, nor consciousness concerning the main aim of his life. Whatever we do we must try and do it rightly—this is obvious—but righteousness implies something much more than this : it conveys to our minds not only the desire to get whatever we have taken in hand as nearly right as possible, but also the general reference of our lives to the supposed will of an unseen but supreme power. Granted that there is such a power, and granted that we should obey its will, we are the more likely to do this the less we concern ourselves about the matter and the more we confine our attention to the things immediately round about us which seem, so to speak, entrusted to us as the natural and legitimate sphere of our activity. I believe a man will get

the most useful information on these matters from modern European sources ; next to these he will get most from Athens and ancient Rome. Mr. Matthew Arnold notwithstanding, I do not think he will get anything from Jerusalem which he will not find better and more easily elsewhere [1883].

#### YOUNG PEOPLE (II. 21).

With regard to sexual matters, the best opinion of our best medical men, the practice of those nations which have proved most vigorous and comely, the evils that have followed this or that, the good that has attended upon the other, should be ascertained by men who, being neither moral nor immoral and not caring two straws what the conclusion arrived at might be, should desire only to get hold of the best available information. The result should be written down with some fulness and put before the young of both sexes as soon as they are old enough to understand such matters at all. There should be no mystery or reserve. None but the corrupt will wish to corrupt facts ; honest people will accept them eagerly, whatever they may prove to be, and will convey them to others as accurately as they can. On what pretext therefore can it be well that knowledge should be withheld from the universal gaze upon a matter of such universal interest ? It cannot be pretended that there is nothing to be known on these matters beyond what unaided boys and girls can be left without risk to find out for themselves. Not one in a hundred who remembers his own boyhood will say this. How, then, are they excusable who have the care of young people and yet leave a matter of such vital importance so almost absolutely to take care of itself, although they well know how common error is, how easy to fall into and how disastrous in its effects both upon the individual and the race ?

Next to sexual matters there are none upon which there is such complete reserve between parents and children as on those connected with money. The father keeps his affairs as closely as he can to himself and is most jealous of letting his children into a knowledge of how he manages his money. His children are like monks in a monastery as regards money and he calls this training them up with the strictest regard to principle. Nevertheless he thinks himself ill-used if his son, on entering life, falls a victim to designing persons whose knowledge of how money is made and lost is greater than his own.

#### PRIGGISHNESS (II. 28).

The essence of priggishness is setting up to be better than one's neighbours. Better may mean more virtuous, more clever, more agreeable or what not. The worst of it is that one cannot do anything outside eating one's dinner or taking a walk without setting up to know more than one's neighbours. It was this that made me say in *Life and Habit* that I was among the damned in that I wrote at all. And so I am ; and I am often very sorry that I was never able to reach those more saintly classes who do not set up as instructors of other people. But one must take one's lot.

#### WOMEN AND RELIGION (IV. 201).

It has been said that all sensible men are of the same religion and that no sensible man ever says what that religion is ; so all sensible men are of the same opinion about women and no sensible man ever says what that opinion is.

## SONNET.

She was too kind, wooed too persistently,  
Wrote moving letters to me day by day ;  
The more she wrote, the more unmoved was I ;  
The more she gave, the less could I repay.  
Therefore I grieve not that I was not loved  
But that, being loved, I could not love again.  
I liked ; but like and love are far removed ;  
Hard though I tried to love I tried in vain.  
For she was plain and lame and fat and short,  
Forty and over-kind. Hence it befell  
That, though I loved her in a certain sort,  
Yet did I love too wisely but not well.

Ah ! had she been more beauteous or less kind  
She might have found me of another mind.

## DIDEROT ON CRITICISM (II. 174).

“ Il est si difficile de produire une chose même médiocre ; il est si facile de sentir la médiocrité.” I have lately seen this quoted as having been said by Diderot. It is easy to say we feel the mediocrity when we have heard a good many people say that the work is mediocre, but, unless in matters about which he has been long conversant, no man can easily form an independent judgement as to whether a work is mediocre or no. I know that in the matter of books, painting and music I constantly find myself unable to form a settled opinion till I have heard what many men of varied tastes have to say, and have also made myself acquainted with details about a man’s antecedents and ways of life which are generally held to be irrelevant.

Often, of course, this is unnecessary ; a man’s character, if he has left much work behind him, or if he is not coming before us for the first time, is generally easily discovered without extraneous aid. We want no one to give us any clues to the natures of such men as Giovanni Bellini, or De Hooghe. Hogarth’s character is written upon his work so plainly that he who runs may read it, so is Handel’s upon

practice any Christian minister, knowing what he preaches to be both very false and very cruel, yet insists on it because it is to the advantage of his own order. In a way the preachers believe what they preach, but it is as men who have taken a bad £10 note and refuse to look at the evidence that makes for its badness, though, if the note were not theirs, they would see at a glance that it was not a good one. For the man in the street it is enough that what the priests teach in respect of a future state is palpably both cruel and absurd while, at the same time, they make their living by teaching it and thus prey upon other men's fears of the unknown. If the Churches do not wish to be misunderstood they should not allow themselves to remain in such an equivocal position.

But let this pass. Bunyan, we may be sure, took all that he preached in its most literal interpretation ; he could never have made his book so interesting had he not done so. The interest of it depends almost entirely on the unquestionable good faith of the writer and the strength of the impulse that compelled him to speak that which was within him. He was not writing a book which he might sell, he was speaking what was borne in upon him from heaven. The message he uttered was, to my thinking, both low and false, but it was truth of truths to Bunyan.

No. This will not do. The Epistles of St. Paul were truth of truths to Paul, but they do not attract us to the man who wrote them, and, except here and there, they are very uninteresting. Mere strength of conviction on a writer's part is not enough to make his work take permanent rank. Yet I know that I could read the whole of *The Pilgrim's Progress* (except occasional episodical sermons) without being at all bored by it, whereas, having spent a penny upon Mr. Stead's abridgement of Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*, I had to give it up as putting me out of all patience. I then spent another penny on an abridgement of *Gulliver's Travels*, and was enchanted by it. What is it

that makes one book so readable and another so unreadable? Swift, from all I can make out, was a far more human and genuine person than he is generally represented, but I do not think I should have liked him, whereas Fielding, I am sure, must have been delightful. Why do the faults of his work outweigh its many great excellencies, while the less great excellencies of the *Voyage to Lilliput* outweigh its more serious defects?

I suppose it is the prolixity of Fielding that fatigues me. Swift is terse, he gets through what he has to say on any matter as quickly as he can and takes the reader on to the next, whereas Fielding is not only long, but his length is made still longer by the disconnectedness of the episodes that appear to have been padded into the books—episodes that do not help one forward, and are generally so exaggerated, and often so full of horse-play as to put one out of conceit with the parts that are really excellent.

Whatever else Bunyan is he is never long ; he takes you quickly on from incident to incident, and, however little his incidents may appeal to us, we feel that he is never giving us one that is not *bond fide* so far as he is concerned. His episodes and incidents are introduced not because he wants to make his book longer, but because he cannot be satisfied without these particular ones, even though he may feel that his book is getting longer than he likes.

And here I must break away from this problem, leaving it unsolved [1897].

#### PERSONALITY (I. 6 ; II. 54, 87, 206 ; III. 45).

It is with books, music, painting, and all the arts, as with children ; only those live that have drained much of their author's own life into them. The personality of the author is what interests us more than his work. When we have once got well hold of the personality of the author we care comparatively little about the history of the work or what

it means or even its technique ; we enjoy the work without thinking of more than its beauty, and of how much we like the workman. "Le style c'est l'homme"—that style of which Buffon, again, says that it is like happiness, and "vient de la douceur de l'âme"—and we care more about knowing what kind of person a man was than about knowing of his achievements no matter how considerable they may have been. If a man has made it clear that he was trying to do what we like, and meant what we should like him to mean, it is enough ; but if the work does not attract us to the workman, neither does it attract us to itself.

#### PORTRAITS (II. 98).

A great portrait is always more a portrait of the painter than of the painted. When we look at a portrait by Holbein or Rembrandt it is of Holbein or Rembrandt we think more than of the subject of their picture. Even a portrait of Shakespeare by Holbein or Rembrandt could tell us very little about Shakespeare. It would, however, tell us a great deal about Holbein or Rembrandt.

#### THOUGHT AND WORD (I. 219; II. 113; III. 44; IV. 61, 72).

Thought pure and simple is as near to God as we can get ; it is through this that we are linked with God. The highest thought is ineffable ; it must be felt from one person to another but cannot be articulated. All the most essential and thinking part of thought is done without words or consciousness. It is not till doubt and consciousness enter that words become possible. The moment a thing is written, or even can be written, and reasoned about it has changed its nature by becoming tangible and hence finite. It has entered into death. And yet till it can be thought about

and realised ; it has not entered into life. We use words to do what comes to very much like trying to mend a watch with a pickaxe or to paint a miniature with a mop ; or to help us to grip and dissect that which in ultimate essence is as ungrippable as a shadow. Nevertheless there they are ; we have got to live with them, and the wise course is to treat them as we do our neighbours, and make the best and not the worst of them ; but they are parvenu people as compared with thought and action.

#### CONVEYANCING AND THE ARTS (III. 48).

In conveyancing the ultimately potent thing is not the deed but the invisible intention and desire of the parties to the deed ; the written document itself is only evidence of this intention and desire. So it is with music, the main thing does not consist of the written notes, nor even of the heard performance ; these are only evidences of an internal invisible emotion that can be felt but never fully expressed. And so it is with the words of literature and with the forms and colours of painting.

#### THE RULES FOR MAKING LITERATURE, MUSIC AND PICTURES (II. 63 ; III. 48).

The arts of the musician, the painter and the writer are essentially the same. In composing a fugue, after you have exposed your subject, which must not be too unwieldy, you introduce an episode or episodes which must arise out of your subject. The great thing is that all shall be new, and yet nothing new, at the same time ; the details must minister to the main effect and not obscure it ; in other words, you must have a subject, develop it and not wander from it very far. This holds just as true for literature and painting and for art of all kinds.

No man should try even to allude to the greater part of what he sees in his subject and there is hardly a limit to what he may omit. What is required is that he shall say what he elects to say discreetly ; that he shall be quick to see the gist of a matter, and give it pithily without either prolixity or stint of words.

#### SUBJECT AND TREATMENT (IV. 61).

It is often said that treatment is more important than subject, but no treatment can make a repulsive subject not repulsive. It can make a trivial, or even a stupid subject interesting, but a really bad flaw in a subject cannot be treated out. Happily the man who has sense enough to treat a subject well will generally have sense enough to choose a good one, so that the case of a really repulsive subject treated in a masterly manner does not often arise. It is often said to have arisen, but in nine cases out of ten the treatment will be found to have been overpraised.

#### BREVITY (IV. 96, 201).

Handel's jig in the ninth *Suite de Pièces*, in G minor, is very fine but it is perhaps a little long. Probably Handel was in a hurry, for it takes much more time to get a thing short than to leave it a little long. Brevity is not only the soul of wit, but the soul of making oneself agreeable and of getting on with people, and, indeed, of everything that makes life worth living. So precious a thing, however, cannot be got without more expense and trouble than most of us have the moral wealth to lay out.

#### DIFFUSENESS (I. 49).

This sometimes helps us, for instance when the subject is hard ; words that may be strictly speaking unnecessary

still may make things easier for the reader by giving him more time to master the thought while his eye is running over the verbiage. So a little water may prevent a strong drink from burning throat and stomach. A style that is too terse is as fatiguing as one that is too diffuse. But when a passage is written a little long, with consciousness and compunction but still deliberately as what will probably be most easy for the reader, it can hardly be called diffuse.

#### A GOOD TITLE (I. 41)

should aim at making what follows as far as possible superfluous to those who know anything of the subject.

#### THE ANCIENT MARINER (IV. 81).

This poem would not have taken so well if it had been called *The Old Sailor*, so that Wardour Street has its uses.

#### LITERARY POWER (II. 92).

They say the test of this is whether a man can write an inscription. I say, "Can he name a kitten?" And by this test I am condemned, for I cannot.

#### ACADEMICISM (II. 121, 142).

The more I see of Academicism the more I distrust it. If I had approached painting as I have approached book-writing and music, that is to say by beginning at once to do what I wanted, or as near as I could to what I could find out of this, and waiting till a difficulty arose in practice before troubling myself about it, letting, in fact, the arising of any difficulty be the occasion on which that particular matter should be attended to, if I had approached painting

in this way I should have been all right ; as it is I have been all wrong, and it was South Kensington and Heatherley's that set me wrong. I listened to the nonsense about how I ought to study before beginning to paint and about never painting without nature, and the result was that I learned to study but not to paint. Now I have got too much to do and am too old to do what I might easily have done and should have done if I had found out earlier what writing *Life and Habit* was the chief thing to teach me.

So I painted study after study, as a priest reads his breviary, and at the end of ten years knew no more what the face of nature was like, unless I had it immediately before me, than I did at the beginning. I am free to confess that in respect of painting I am a failure. I have spent far more time on painting than I have on anything else, and have failed at it more than I have failed in any other respect almost solely for the reasons given above. I tried very hard, but I tried the wrong way.

Fortunately for me there are no academies for teaching people how to write books, or I should have fallen into them as I did into those for painting, and, instead of writing, should have spent my time and money on being told that I was learning how to write. If I had one thing to say to students before I died (that is, if I had got to die, but might tell students one thing first) I should say—

“Don't learn to do, but learn in doing. Let your falls not be on a prepared ground, but let them be *bond fide* falls in the rough and tumble of the world ; only, of course, let them be on a small scale in the first instance till you feel your feet safe under you. Act more and rehearse less.”

Handicapped people sometimes owe their success to the misfortune which weights them. They seldom know beforehand how far they are going to reach, and this helps them, for if they knew the greatness of the task before them they would not attempt it. He who knows he is infirm and would yet climb does not think of the summit

which he believes to be beyond his reach but climbs slowly onwards, taking very short steps, looking below as often as he likes but not above him, never trying his powers but seldom stopping, and then, sometimes, Behold ! he is on the top, which he would never have even aimed at could he have seen it from below. It is only in novels and sensational biographies that handicapped people, "fired by a knowledge of the difficulties that others have overcome, resolve to triumph over every obstacle by dint of sheer determination, and in the end carry everything before them." In real life the person who starts thus almost invariably fails. This is the worst kind of start.

The greatest secret of good work, whether in music, literature or painting, lies in not attempting too much ; if it is asked, "What is too much ?" the answer is, "Anything that we find difficult or unpleasant." We should not ask whether others find this same thing difficult or no. If we find the difficulty so great that the overcoming it is a labour not a pleasure, we should either change our aim altogether or aim, at any rate for a time, at some lower point.

It must be remembered that no work is required to be more than right as far as it goes. The greatest work cannot get beyond this and the least comes strangely near the greatest if this can be said of it.

#### MR. DARWIN ON WHAT SELLS A Book (I. 92, 134).

I remember when I was at Down we were talking of what it is that sells a book. Mr. Darwin said he did not believe it was reviews or advertisements, but simply "being talked about" that sold a book. I believe he is quite right here, but surely a good flaming review helps to get a book talked about. I have often inquired at my publishers' after a review, and I never found one that made any perceptible

increase or decrease of sale, and the same with advertisements. I think, however, that the review of *Erewhon* in the *Spectator* did sell a few copies of *Erewhon*, but then it was such a very strong one and the anonymousness of the book stimulated curiosity. A perception of the value of a review, whether friendly or hostile, is as old as St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians.<sup>1</sup>

#### HANDEL AND OTHERS (I. 33, 122).

It is only great proprietors who can steal well and wisely. A good stealer, a good user of what he takes, is *ipso facto* a good inventor. Two men can invent after a fashion, to one who knows how to make the best use of what has been done already. Whenever I see what I think to be an appropriate passage, I always suit the action to the word and appropriate it.

#### HANDEL'S COMMONPLACES (I. 48 ; II. 79).

It takes as great a composer as Handel—or rather it would take as great a composer if he could be found—to be able to be as easily and triumphantly commonplace as Handel often is, just as it takes—or rather would take—as great a composer as Handel to write another *Hallelujah* chorus. It is only the man who can do the latter who can do the former as Handel has done it. Handel is so

<sup>1</sup> Philippians i. 15-18.

Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:

The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds:

But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.

What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.

great and so simple that no one but a professional musician is unable to understand him.

### AND THE GLORY OF THE LORD (II. 79).

It would be hard to find a more satisfactory chorus even in the *Messiah*, but I do not think the music was originally intended for these words.

And the glo - ry, the glo - ry of the Lord.

If Handel had approached these words without having in his head a subject the spirit of which would do and which he thought the words with a little management might be made to fit, he would not, I think, have repeated "the glory" at all, or at any rate not here. If these words had been measured as it were for a new suit instead of being, as I suppose, furnished with a good second-hand one, the word "the" would not have been tacked on to the "glory" which precedes it and made to belong to it rather than to the "glory" which follows. It does not matter one straw, and if Handel had asked me whether I minded his forcing the words a little, I should have said, "Certainly not, nor more than a little, if you like." Nevertheless I think as a matter of fact that there is a little forcing. I remember that as a boy this always struck me as a strange arrangement of the words, but it was not until I came to write a chorus myself that I saw how it came about. I do not suspect any forcing when it comes to "And all flesh shall see it together."

### HANDEL AND THE WETTERHORN (I. 71).

When last I saw the Wetterhorn I caught myself involuntarily humming :—



And the government shall be up - on his shoul - der . . . . . der.

The big shoulder of the Wetterhorn seemed to fall just like  
the run on "shoulder."

#### HANDEL AND TYRANTS NOW NO MORE SHALL DREAD (I. 201).

The music to this chorus in *Hercules* is written from the tyrant's point of view. This is plain from the jubilant defiance with which the chorus opens and becomes still plainer when the magnificent strain to which he has set the words "All fear of punishment, all fear is o'er" bursts upon us. Here he flings aside all considerations save that of the gospel of doing whatever we please without having to pay for it. He has, however, remembered himself and become almost puritanical over "The world's avenger is no more." Here he is quite proper.

From a dramatic point of view Handel's treatment of these words must be condemned for reasons in respect of which Handel was very rarely at fault. It puzzles the listener who expects the words to be treated from the point of view of the vanquished slaves and not from that of the tyrants. There is no pretence that these particular tyrants are not so bad as ordinary tyrants, nor these particular vanquished slaves not so good as ordinary vanquished slaves, and, unless this has been made clear in some way, it is dramatically *de rigueur* that the tyrants should come to grief, or be about to come to grief. The hearer should know which way his sympathies are expected to go, and here we have the music dragging us one way and the words another.

Nevertheless, we pardon the departure from the strict rules of the game, partly because of the welcome nature of good tidings so exultantly announced to us about all fear of

punishment being o'er, and partly because the music is, throughout, so much stronger than the words that we lose sight of them almost entirely. Handel probably wrote as he did from a profound, though perhaps unconscious, perception of the fact that even in his day there was a great deal of humanitarian nonsense talked and that, after all, the tyrants were generally quite as good sort of people as the vanquished slaves. Having begun on this tack, it was easy to throw morality to the winds when he came to the words about all fear of punishment being over.

#### HANDEL'S SHOWER OF RAIN (I. 193).

The falling shower in the air, "As cheers the sun" in *Joshua*, is, I think, the finest description of a warm sunny refreshing rain that I have ever come across and one of the most wonderfully descriptive pieces of music that even Handel ever did.

#### AT A HANDEL FESTIVAL (II. 150, 151).

##### I

The large sweeps of sound floated over the orchestra like the wind playing upon a hill-side covered with young heather, and I sat and wondered which of the Alpine passes Handel crossed when he went into Italy. What time of the year was it? What kind of weather did he have? Were the spring flowers out? Did he walk the greater part of the way as we do now? And what did he hear? For he must sometimes have heard music inside him—and that, too, as much above what he has written down as what he has written down is above all other music. No man can catch all, or always the best, of what is put for a moment

or two within his reach. Handel took as much and as near the best, doubtless, as mortal man can take ; but he must have had moments and glimpses which were given to him alone and which he could tell no man.

## II

I saw the world a great orchestra filled with angels whose instruments were of gold. And I saw the organ on the top of the axis round which all should turn, but nothing turned and nothing moved and the angels stirred not and all was as still as a stone, and I was myself also, like the rest, as still as a stone.

Then I saw some huge cloud-like forms nearing and Behold ! it was the Lord bringing two of his children by the hand.

“ O Papa ! ” said one, “ isn’t it pretty ? ”

“ Yes, my dear,” said the Lord, “ and if you drop a penny into the box the figures will work.”

Then I saw that what I had taken for the keyboard of the organ was no keyboard but only a slit, and one of the little Lords dropped a plaque of metal into it. And then the angels played and the world turned round and the organ made a noise and the people began killing one another and the two little Lords clapped their hands and were delighted.

## HANDEL AND DICKENS (I. 63).

They buried Dickens in the very next grave, cheek by jowl with Handel. It does not matter, but it pained me to think that people who could do this could become Deans of Westminster.

## THE BISHOP OF CHICHESTER AT FAIDO (II. 210).

When I was at Faido in the Val Leventina last summer there was a lady there who remembered me in New Zealand; she had brought her children to Switzerland for their holiday; good people, all of them. They had friends coming to them, a certain canon and his sister, and there was a talk that the Bishop of Chichester might possibly come too. In course of time the canon and his sister came. At first the sister, who was put to sit next me at dinner, was below zero and her brother opposite was hardly less freezing; but as dinner wore on they thawed, and, from regarding me as the monster which in the first instance they clearly did, began to see that I agreed with them in much more than they had thought possible. By and by they were reassured, became cordial and proved on acquaintance to be most kind and good. They soon saw that I liked them, and the canon let me take him where I chose. I took him to the place where the Woodsias grow and we found some splendid specimens. I took him to Mairengo and showed him the double chancel. Coming back he said I had promised to show him some Alternifolium. I stopped him and said—

“Here is some,” for there happened to be a bit in the wall by the side of the path.

This quite finished the conquest, and before long I was given to understand that the bishop really would come and we were to take him pretty near the Woodsias and not tell him, and he was to find them out for himself. I have no doubt that the bishop had meant coming with the canon, but then the canon had heard from the New Zealand lady that I was there, and this would not do at all for the bishop. Anyhow the canon had better exploit me first and go first and see how bad I was. So the canon came, said I was all right, and in a couple of days or so the bishop and his daughters arrived.

The bishop did not speak to me at dinner, but after dinner, in the salon, he made an advance in the matter of the newspaper and, I replying, he began a conversation which lasted the best part of an hour and during which I hope I behaved discreetly. Then I bade him "Good-night" and left the room.

Next morning I saw him eating his breakfast and said "Good-morning" to him. He was quite ready to talk. We discussed the Woodsia Ilvenis and agreed that it was a mythical species. It was said in botany books to grow near Guildford. We dismissed this assertion; but he remarked that it was extraordinary in what odd places we sometimes do find plants; he knew a single plant of Asplenium Trichomanes which had no other within thirty miles of it; it was growing on a tombstone which had come from a long distance and from a Trichomanes country. It almost seemed as if the seeds and germs were always going about in the air and grew wherever they found a suitable environment. I said it was the same with our thoughts; the germs of all manner of thoughts and ideas are always floating about unperceived in our minds and it was astonishing sometimes in what strange places they found the soil which enabled them to take root and grow into perceived thought and action. The bishop looked up from his egg and said—

"That is a very striking remark," and then he went on with his egg as though if I were going to talk like that he should not play any more.

Thinking I was not likely to do better than this, I retreated immediately and went away down to Claro where there was a confirmation and so on to Bellinzona.

In the morning I had asked the waitress how she liked the bishop.

"Oh ! beaucoup, beaucoup," she exclaimed, "et je trouve son nez vraiment noble" [1886].

## THE Two BARRISTERS AT YPRES (III. 3).

When Gogin and I were taking our Easter holiday this year we went, among other places, to Ypres. We put up at the Hotel Tête d'Or and found it exquisitely clean, comfortable and cheap, with a charming old-world, last-century feeling. It was Good Friday, and we were to dine *maigre*; this was so clearly *de rigueur* that we did not venture even the feeblest protest.

When we came down to dinner we were told that there were two other gentlemen, also English, who were to dine with us, and in due course they appeared—the one a man verging towards fifty-eight, a kind of cross between Cardinal Manning and the late Mr. John Parry, the other some ten years younger, amiable looking and, I should say, not so shining a light in his own sphere as his companion. These two sat on one side of the table and we opposite them. There was an air about them both which said, “ You are not to try to get into conversation with us ; we shall not let you if you do ; we dare say you are very good sort of people, but we have nothing in common ; so long as you keep quiet we will not hurt you, but if you so much as ask us to pass the melted butter we will shoot you.” We saw this and so during the first two courses talked *sotto voce* to one another, and made no attempt to open up communications.

With the third course, however, there was a new arrival in the person of a portly gentleman of about fifty-five, or from that to sixty, who was told to sit at the head of the table, and accordingly did so. This gentleman had a decided manner and carried quite as many guns as the two barristers (for barristers they were) who sat opposite to us. He had rather a red nose, he dined *maigre* because he had to, but he did not like it. I do not think he dined *maigre* often. He had something of the air of a half, if not wholly, broken-down blackguard of a gambler who had

seen much but had moved in good society and been accustomed to have things more or less his own way.

This gentleman, who before he went gave us his card, immediately opened up conversation both with us and our neighbours, addressing his remarks alternately and impartially to each. He said he was an Italian who had the profoundest admiration for England. I said at once—

“Lei non può amare l’Inghilterra più che io amo ed ammiro l’Italia.”

The Manning-Parry barrister looked up with an air of slightly offended surprise. Conversation was from this point carried on between both parties through the Italian, who acted, as Gogin said afterwards, like one of those stones in times of plague on to which people from the country put their butter and eggs and people from the town their money.

By and by dealings became more direct between us and at last, I know not how, I found myself in full discussion with the elder barrister as to whether Jean Van Eyck’s picture in the National Gallery commonly called *Portrait of John Arnolfini and his Wife* should not properly be held to be a portrait of Van Eyck himself (which, by the way, I suppose there is no doubt that it should not, though I have never gone into the evidence for the present inscription). Then they spoke of the tricks of light practised by De Hooghe; so we rebelled, and said De Hooghe had no tricks—no one less—and that what they called trick was only observation and direct rendering of nature. Then they applauded Tintoretto, and so did we, but still as men who were bowing the knee to Baal. We put in a word for Gaudenzio Ferrari, but they had never heard of him. Then they played Raffaelle as a safe card and we said he was a master of line and a facile decorator, but nothing more.

On this all the fat was in the fire, for they had invested in Raffaelle as believing him to be the Three per Cents. of artistic securities. Did I not like the *Madonna di S. Sisto*?

I said, "No." I said the large photo looked well at a distance because the work was so concealed under a dark and sloppy glaze that any one might see into it pretty much what he chose to bring, while the small photo looked well because it had gained so greatly by reduction. I said the Child was all very well as a child but a failure as a Christ as all infant Christs must be to the end of time. I said the Pope and female saint, whoever she was, were commonplace as also the angels at the bottom. I admitted the beauty of line in the Virgin's drapery and also that the work was an effective piece of decoration, but I said it was not inspired by devotional or serious feeling of any kind and for impressiveness could not hold its own with even a very average Madonna by Giovanni Bellini. They appealed to the Italian, but he said there was a great reaction against Raffaelle in Italy now and that few of the younger men thought of him as their fathers had done. Gogin, of course, backed me up, so they were in a minority. It was not at all what they expected or were accustomed to. I yielded wherever I could and never differed without giving a reason which they could understand. They must have seen that there was no malice prepense, but it always came round to this in the end that we did not agree with them.

Then they played Leonardo Da Vinci ; I had not intended saying how cordially I dislike him, but presently they became enthusiastic about the head of the Virgin in the *Vierge aux Rochers* in our Gallery. I said Leonardo had not succeeded with this head ; he had succeeded with the angel's head lower down to the right (I think) of the picture, but had failed with the Madonna. They did not like my talking about Leonardo Da Vinci as now succeeding and now failing, just like other people. I said it was perhaps fortunate that we knew the *Last Supper* only by engravings and might fancy the original to have been more full of individuality than the engravings are, and I greatly questioned whether I should have liked the work if I had

seen it as it was when Leonardo left it. As for his caricatures he should not have done them, much less preserved them ; the fact of his having set store by them was enough to show that there was a screw loose about him somewhere and that he had no sense of humour. Still, I admitted that I liked him better than I did Michael Angelo.

Whatever we touched upon the same fatality attended us ; fortunately neither evolution nor politics came under discussion. Nor yet, happily, music, or they would have praised Beethoven and very likely Mendelssohn too. They did begin to run Nuremberg, and it was on the tip of my tongue to say, "Yes, but there's the flavour of *Faust* and Goethe" ; however, I did not. In course of time the *séance* ended, though not till nearly ten o'clock, and we all went to bed.

Next morning we saw them at breakfast and they were quite tame. As Gogin said afterwards, "They came and sat on our fingers and ate crumbs out of our hands" [1887].

#### MRS. HICKS (II. 65, 141).

She and her husband, an old army sergeant who was all through the Indian Mutiny, are two very remarkable people—they keep a public-house where we often get our beer when out for our Sunday walk. She owns to sixty-seven, I should think she was a full seventy-five, and her husband, say, sixty-five. She is a tall, raw-boned Gothic woman with a strong family likeness to the crooked old crusader who lies in the church transept and one would expect to find her body scrawled over with dates ranging from 400 years ago to the present time, just as the marble figure itself is. She has a great beard and moustaches and three projecting teeth in her lower jaw but no more in any part of her mouth. She moves slowly and is always a little in liquor besides being singularly dirty in her person. Her husband is like unto her.

For all this they are hard-working, industrious people, keep no servant, pay cash for everything, are clearly going up rather than down in the world, and live well. She always shows us what she is going to have for dinner and it is excellent—"And I made the stuffing over night and the gravy first thing this morning." Each time we go we find the house a little more done up. She dotes on Mr. Hicks—we never go there without her wedding day being referred to. She has earned her own living ever since she was ten years old and lived twenty-nine and a half years in the house from which Mr. Hicks married her. "I am as happy," she said, "as the day is long." She dearly loves a joke and a little flirtation. I always say something perhaps a little impudently broad to her and she likes it extremely. Last time she sailed smilingly out of the room, doubtless to tell Mr. Hicks, and came back still smiling.

When we come we find her as though she had "lien among the pots," but as soon as she has given us our beer she goes up-stairs and puts on a cap and a clean apron and washes her face—that is to say, she washes a round piece in the middle of her face leaving a great glory of dirt showing all round it. It is plain the pair are respected by the manner in which all who come in treat them.

Last time we were there she said she hoped she should not die yet. "You see," she said, "I am beginning now to know how to live." These were her own words, and, considering the circumstances under which they were spoken, they are enough to stamp the speaker as a remarkable woman. She has got as much from age and lost as little from youth as woman can well do. Nevertheless, to look at, she is like one of the witches in *Macbeth*.

#### NEW-LAID EGGS (IV. 149).

When I take my Sunday walks in the country, I try to buy a few really new-laid eggs warm from the nest. At

this time of the year (January) they are very hard to come by, and I have long since invented a sick wife who has implored me to get her a few eggs laid not earlier than the self-same morning. Of late, as I am getting older, it has become my daughter who has just had a little baby. This will generally draw a new-laid egg, if there is one about the place at all.

At Harrow Weald it has always been my wife, who for years has been a great sufferer, and finds a really new-laid egg the one thing she can digest in the way of solid food. So I turned her on as movingly as I could not long since, and was at last sold some eggs that were no better than common shop eggs, if so good. Next time I went I said my poor wife had been made seriously ill by them ; it was no use trying to deceive her ; she could tell a new-laid egg from a bad one as well as any woman in London, and she had so high a temper that it was very unpleasant for me when she found herself disappointed.

“ Ah ! sir,” said the landlady, “ but you would not like to lose her.”

“ Ma’am,” I replied, “ I must not allow my thoughts to wander in that direction. But it’s no use bringing her stale eggs, anyhow.”

#### THE BEAUTIES OF NATURE (II. 140).

A man told me that at some Swiss hotel he had been speaking enthusiastically about the beauty of the scenery to a Frenchman, who said to him—

“ Aimez-vous donc les beautés de la Nature ? Pour moi je les abhorre.”

#### TERBOURG (II. 182).

Gogin told me that an impulsive Swede whom he had known in Laurens’s study in Paris and who painted very

well came to London and was taken by a friend to the National Gallery where he became very enthusiastic about the Terbouys. They then went for a walk, and, in Kensington Gore, near one of the entrances to Hyde Park or Kensington Gardens, there was an old Irish apple-woman sitting with her feet in a basket, smoking and selling oranges. The Swede, still raving about the Terbouys, took off his hat to her, and said—

“O Madame, avez-vous vu les Terbouys ? Allez voir les Terbouys.” And passed on without waiting for a reply.

#### AT DOCTORS' COMMONS (I. 3).

A woman once stopped me at the entrance to Doctors' Commons and said, “If you please, sir, can you tell me—is this the place that I came to before ?” Not knowing where she had been before I could not tell her.

#### SON BUONA PER LAVORARE LA TERRA (I. 188).

I once offered to show to a poor peasant woman at Prato in the Val Leventina a picture I was painting there. She said—

“Caro Signore, son buona per lavorare la terra, ma per la geografia non son capace.” She was so scared she would not even look.

#### THE SACK OF KHARTOUM (II. 118).

As I was getting out of a 'bus the conductor said to me in a confidential tone, “I say, what does that mean ? ‘Sack of Khartoum’ ? What does ‘Sack of Khartoum’ mean ?”

“It means,” said I, “that they’ve taken Khartoum and played hell with it all round.” He understood that and thanked me, whereon we parted.

## ADAM AND EVE (I. 64).

A little boy and a little girl were looking at a picture of Adam and Eve.

“ Which is Adam, and which Eve ? ” said one.

“ I do not know,” said the other, “ but I could tell if they had their clothes on.”

## DOES MAMMA KNOW ? (II. 173).

A father was telling his eldest daughter, aged about six, that she had a little sister, and was explaining to her how nice it all was. The child said it was delightful and added—

“ Does Mamma know ? Let’s go and tell her.”

## MR. DARWIN IN THE ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS (I. 122).

Frank Darwin told me his father was once standing near the hippopotamus cage when a little boy and girl, aged four and five, came up. The hippopotamus shut his eyes for a minute.

“ That bird’s dead,” said the little girl, “ come along.”

## PUBLIC OPINION (IV. 37).

The public buys its opinions as it buys its meat, or takes in its milk, on the principle that it is cheaper to do this than to keep a cow. So it is, but the milk is more likely to be watered.

## THESE NOTES (IV. 37).

I make them under the impression that I may use them in my books, but I never do unless I happen to remember them at the right time. When I wrote *Ramblings in Cheapside* [an article in the *Universal Review*, reprinted in *Essays on Life, Art, and Science*] the preceding note about Public Opinion would have come in admirably ; it was in my pocket, in my little black note-book, but I forgot all about it till I came to post this note-book into my ledger.

## THE WIFE OF BATH (IV. 95).

(For *Ramblings in Cheapside* if that article is ever enlarged.)

There are Canterbury Pilgrims every Sunday in summer who start from close to the old Tabard, only they go by the South-Eastern Railway and come back the same day for five shillings. And, what is more, they are just the same sort of people. If they do not go to Canterbury they go by the *Clacton Belle* to Clacton-on-Sea. There is not a Sunday the whole summer through but you may find all Chaucer's pilgrims, man and woman for man and woman, on board the *Lord of the Isles* or the *Clacton Belle*. Why, I have seen the Wife of Bath on the *Lord of the Isles* myself. She was eating her luncheon off an *Ally Sloper's Half-Holiday*, which was spread out upon her knees. Whether it was I who had had too much beer or she I cannot tell, God knoweth ; and whether or no I was caught up into Paradise, again I cannot tell ; but I certainly did hear unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter, and that not above fourteen years ago but the very last Sunday that ever was. The Wife of Bath heard them too, but she never turned a hair. Luckily I had my detective camera with me, so I snapped her there and then. She put her hand up to her mouth at that very moment and rather spoiled herself, but not much [1891].

## BEETHOVEN AT FAIDO AND AT BOULOGNE (II. 133).

I have twice seen people so unmistakably like Beethoven (just as Madame Patey is unmistakably like Handel and only wants dressing in costume to be the image of him not in features only, but in figure and air and manner) that I always think of them as Beethoven.

Once, at Faido in the Val Leventina, in 1876 or 1877, when the engineers were there surveying for the tunnel, there was among them a rather fine-looking young German with wild, ginger hair that rang out to the wild sky like

the bells in *In Memoriam* and a strong Edmund Gurney cut<sup>1</sup>, who played Wagner and was great upon the overture to *Lohengrin*; as for Handel—he was not worth consideration, etc. Well, this young man rather took a fancy to me and I did not dislike him, but one day, to tease him, I told him that a little insignificant-looking engineer, the most commonplace mortal imaginable, who was sitting at the head of the table, was like Beethoven. He was very like him indeed, and Müller saw it, smiled and flushed at the same time. He was short, getting on in years and was a little thick, though not fat. A few days afterwards he went away and Müller and I happened to meet his box—an enormous cube of a trunk—coming down the stairs.

“That’s Beethoven’s box,” said Müller to me.

“Oh,” I said, and, looking at it curiously for a moment, asked gravely, “And is he inside it?” It seemed to fit him and to correspond so perfectly with him in every way that one felt as though if he were not inside it he ought to be.

The second time was at Boulogne this spring. There were three Germans at the Hotel de Paris who sat together, went in and out together, smoked together and did everything as though they were a unity in trinity and a trinity in unity. We settled that they must be the Heckmann Quartet, minus Heckmann: we had not the smallest reason for thinking this but we settled it at once. The middle one of these was like Beethoven also. On Easter Sunday, after dinner, when he was a little—well, it was after dinner and his hair went rather mad—J. said to me—

“Do you see that Beethoven has got into the posthumous quartet stage?” [1885].

<sup>1</sup> Edmund Gurney, author of *The Power of Sound*, and Secretary of the Society for Psychical Research.

(To be continued.)

THE NOTE-BOOKS  
OF  
SAMUEL BUTLER

AUTHOR OF *EREWTHON*

(By permission of his Literary Executor, Mr. R. A. STREATFIELD.)

IV.



# THE NOTE-BOOKS OF SAMUEL BUTLER

## IV

### ART AND TRADE (IV. 6).

PEOPLE confound literature and article-dealing because the plant in both cases is similar, but no two things can be more distinct. Neither the question of money nor that of friend or foe can enter into literature proper. Here, right feeling—or good taste, if this expression be preferred—is alone considered. If a *bona-fide* writer thinks a thing wants saying, he will say it as tersely, clearly and elegantly as he can. The question whether it will do him personally good or harm or how it will affect this or that friend never enters his head, or, if it does, it is instantly ordered out again. The only personal gratification allowed him (apart, of course, from such as are conceded to every one, writer or no) is that of keeping his good name spotless among those whose opinion is alone worth having and of maintaining the highest traditions of a noble calling. If a man lives in fear and trembling lest he should fail in these respects, if he finds these considerations alone weigh with him, if he never writes without thinking how he shall best serve good causes and damage bad ones, then he is a genuine man of letters. If in addition to this he succeeds in making his manner attractive, he will become a classic. He knows this. He knows, although the Greeks in their mythology forgot to say so, that Conceit was saved to mankind as well as Hope when Pandora clapped the lid on to her box.

With the article-dealer on the other hand money is, and ought to be, the first consideration. Literature is an art ; article-writing, when a man is paid for it, is a trade and none the worse for that ; but pot-boilers are one thing and genuine pictures are another. People have indeed been paid for some of the most genuine pictures ever painted, and so with music, and so with literature itself—hard-and-fast lines ever cut the fingers of those who draw them—but as a general rule most lasting art has been poorly paid, so far as money goes, till the artist was near the end of his time, and whether money passed or no we may be sure that it was not thought of. Such work is done as a bird sings—for the love of the thing ; it is persevered in as long as body and soul can be kept together, whether there be pay or no and perhaps better if there be no pay.

Nevertheless, though art disregards money and trade disregards art, the artist may stand not a little trade-alloy and be even toughened by it, and the tradesman may be more than half an artist. Art is in the world but not of it ; it lives in a kingdom of its own, governed by laws that none but artists can understand. This, at least, is the ideal towards which an artist tends, though we all very well know we none of us reach it. With the trade it is exactly the reverse ; this world is, and ought to be, everything, and the invisible world is as little to the trade as this visible world is to the artist.

When I say the artist tends towards such a world I mean not that he tends consciously and reasonably, but that his instinct to take this direction will be too strong to let him take any other. He is incapable of reasoning on the subject ; if he could reason he would be lost *qua* artist, for, by every test that reason can apply, those who sell themselves for a price are in the right. The artist is guided by a faith that for him transcends all reason. Granted that this faith has been in great measure founded on reason, that it has grown up along with reason, that if it lose touch with

reason it is no longer faith but madness ; granted, again, that reason is in great measure founded on faith, that it has grown up along with faith, that if it lose touch with faith it is no longer reason but mechanism ; granted therefore that faith grows with reason as will with power, as demand with supply, as mind with body, each stimulating and augmenting the other until an invisible, minute nucleus attains colossal growth—nevertheless the difference between the man of the world and the man who lives by faith is that the first is drawn towards the one and the second towards the other of two principles which, so far as we can see, are co-extensive and co-equal in importance.

#### THE UNSEEN WORLD (II. 211 ; III. 66 ; IV. 17).

I believe that there is an unseen world about which we know nothing as firmly as any one can believe it. I see things coming up from it into the visible world and going down again from the seen world to the unseen. But my unseen world is to be *bona-fide* unseen and, in so far as I say I know anything about it, I stultify myself. It should no more be described than God should be represented in painting or sculpture. It is as the other side of the moon ; we know it must be there but we know also that, in the nature of things, we can never see it. Sometimes some trifle of it may sway into sight and out again, but it is so little that it is not worth counting as having been seen.

#### MONEY (II. 95).

It is curious that money which is the most valuable thing in life, *exceptis excipiendis*, should be the most fatal corruptor of music, literature, painting and all the arts. As soon as any art is pursued with a view to money then farewell, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, all hope of genuine good work. If a man has money at his back he

may touch these things and do something which will live a long while, and he may be very happy in doing it ; if he has no money he may do good work, but the chances are he will be killed in doing it and for having done it ; or he may make himself happy by doing bad work and getting money out of it, and there is no great harm in this provided he knows his work is done in this spirit and rates it for its commercial value only. Still, as a rule, a man should not touch any of the arts as a creator unless he has a *discreta posizionina* behind him.

#### MODERN SIMONY (II. 9, 20 ; III. 28).

It is not the dealing in livings but the thinking they can buy the Holy Ghost for money which vulgar rich people indulge in when they dabble in literature, music and painting.

Nevertheless, on reflection it occurs to me that the Holy Ghost is very hard to come by without money. For the Holy Ghost is only another term for the Fear of our Lord, which is Wisdom. And though Wisdom cannot be gotten for gold, still less can it be gotten without it. Gold, or the value that is equivalent to gold, lies at the root of Wisdom, and enters so largely into the very essence of the Holy Ghost that "No gold, no Holy Ghost" may pass as an axiom. This is perhaps why it is not easy to buy Wisdom by whatever name it be called—I mean because it is almost impossible to sell it. It is a very unmarketable commodity, as those who have received it truly know to their own great bane and boon.

#### LOGIC AND FAITH (IV. 90).

Logic is like the sword—those who appeal to it shall perish by it. Faith is appealing to the living God, and one may perish by that too, but somehow one would rather

perish that way than the other, and one has got to perish sooner or later.

### THE WORLD (V. 154).

Even the world, so *mondain* as it is, still holds instinctively and as a matter of faith unquestionable that those who have died by the altar are worthier than those who have lived by it, when to die was duty.

### FAITH AND REASON (II. 86).

The instinct towards brushing faith aside and being strictly reasonable is strong and natural : so also is the instinct towards brushing logic and consistency on one side if they become troublesome, in other words—so is the instinct towards basing action on a faith which is beyond reason. It is because both instincts are so natural that so many accept and so many reject Catholicism. The two go along for some time as very good friends and then fight ; sometimes one beats and sometimes the other, but they always make it up again and jog along as before, for they have a great respect for one another.

### COMMON-SENSE, REASON AND FAITH (IV. 62).

Reason is not the ultimate test of truth nor is it the court of first instance.

For example : A man questions his own existence ; he applies first to the court of mother-wit and is promptly told that he exists ; he appeals next to reason and, after some wrangling, is told that the matter is very doubtful ; he proceeds to the equity of that reasonable faith which inspires and transcends reason, and the judgment of the court of first instance is upheld while that of reason is reversed.

Nevertheless it is folly to appeal from reason to faith unless one is pretty sure of a verdict and, in most cases about which we dispute seriously, reason is as far as we need go.

#### THE CREDIT SYSTEM (II. 1, 8, 42 ; III. 58).

The whole world is carried on on the credit system ; if every one were to demand payment in hard cash there would be universal bankruptcy. We think as we do mainly because other people think so. But if every one stands on every one else, what does the bottom man stand on ? Faith is no foundation, for it rests in the end on reason. Reason is no foundation, for it rests upon faith.

#### ARGUMENT (III. 58).

We are not won by argument, which is like reading and writing, and disappears when there is need of such vanity, or like colour that vanishes with too much light or shade, or like sound that becomes silence in the extremes. Argument is useless when there is either no conviction at all or a very strong conviction. It is a means of conviction and as such belongs to the means of conviction, not to the extremes. We are not won by arguments that we can analyse, but by tone and temper, by the manner which is the man himself.

#### PHILOSOPHY (I. 149, V. 102).

As a general rule philosophy is like stirring mud or not letting a sleeping dog lie. It is an attempt to deny, circumvent or otherwise escape from the consequences of the interlacing of the roots of things with one another. It professes to appease our ultimate "Why ?" though in truth it is generally the solution of a *simplex ignotum* by a *complex ignotius*. This, at least, is my experience of everything that has been

presented to me as philosophy. I have often had my “Why?” answered with so much mystifying matter that I have left off pressing it through fatigue. But this is not having my ultimate “Why?” appeased. It is being knocked out of time.

#### PHILOSOPHY AND EQUAL TEMPERAMENT (II. 120).

It is with philosophy as with just intonation on a piano, if you get everything quite straight and on all fours in one department, in perfect tune, it is delightful so long as you keep well in the middle of the key; but as soon as you modulate you find the new key is out of tune and the more remotely you modulate the more out of tune you get. The only way is to distribute your error by equal temperament and leave common-sense to make the correction in philosophy which the ear does instantaneously and involuntarily in music.

#### HEDGING THE CUCKOO (VI. 70).

People will still keep trying to find some formula that shall hedge-in the cuckoo of mental phenomena to their satisfaction. Half the books—nay, all of them that deal with thought and its ways in the academic spirit—are but so many of these hedges in various stages of decay.

#### GOD AND PHILOSOPHIES (I. 168; II. 42).

All philosophies if you ride them home are nonsense, but some are greater nonsense than others. It is, perhaps, because God does not set much store by or wish to encourage them that he has attached such very slender rewards to them.

## LOGIC AND PHILOSOPHY (I. 164).

When you have got all the rules and all the lore of philosophy and logic well into your head and have spent years in getting to understand at any rate what they mean and have them at command, you will know less for practical purposes than one who has never studied logic or philosophy.

## SCIENCE (I. 113, 201).

If it tends to thicken the crust of ice on which, as it were, we are skating, it is all right. If it tries to find, or professes to have found, the solid ground at the bottom of the water, it is all wrong. Our business is with the thickening of this crust by extending our knowledge downward from above, as ice gets thicker while the frost lasts ; we should not try to freeze upwards from the bottom.

## RELIGION (I. 49; II. 15; V. 137).

A religion only means something so certainly posed that nothing can ever displace it. It is an attempt to settle first principles so authoritatively that no one need so much as even think of ever re-opening them for himself or feel any, even the faintest, misgiving upon the matter. It is an attempt to get an irrefragably safe investment, and this cannot be got, no matter how low the interest, which in the case of religion is about as low as it can be.

Any religion that cannot be founded on half a sheet of note-paper will be bottom-heavy, and this, in a matter so essentially of sentiment as religion, is as bad as being top-heavy in a material construction. It must of course catch on to reason, but the less it emphasises the fact the better.

FIRST PRINCIPLES (I. 124, 153, 204; II. 15, 78; III. 49, 58;  
IV. 133).

It is said we can build no superstructure without a foundation of unshakable principles. There are no such principles. Or, if there be any foundation, it is beyond our reach—we cannot fathom it ; therefore, *qua* us, it has no existence, for there is no other “is not” than inconceivableness by ourselves. There is one thing certain, namely, that we can have nothing certain ; therefore it is not certain that we can have nothing certain. We are as men who will insist on looking over the brink of a precipice ; some few can gaze into the abyss below without losing their heads, but most men will grow dizzy and fall. The only thing to do is to glance at the chaos on which our thoughts are founded, recognise that it is a chaos and that, in the nature of things, no theoretically firm ground is even conceivable, and then to turn aside with the disgust, fear and horror of one who has been looking into his own entrails.

Even Euclid cannot lay a demonstrable premise, he requires postulates and axioms which transcend demonstration and without which he can do nothing. His superstructure is demonstration, his ground is faith. And so his *ultima ratio* is to tell a man that he is a fool by saying “Which is absurd.” If his opponent chooses to hold out in spite of this, Euclid can do no more. Faith and authority are as necessary for him as for any one else. True, he does not want us to believe very much ; his yoke is tolerably easy, and he will not call a man a fool until he will have public opinion generally on his side ; but none the less does he begin with dogmatism and end with persecution.

There is nothing one cannot wrangle about. Sensible

people will agree to a middle course founded upon a few general axioms and propositions about which, right or wrong, they will not think it worth while to wrangle for some time, and those who reject these can be put into mad-houses. The middle way may be as full of hidden rocks as the other ways are of manifest ones, but it is the pleasantest while we can keep to it, and the dangers, being hidden, are less alarming.

. . . . .  
In practice it is seldom very hard to do one's duty when one knows what it is, but it is sometimes exceedingly difficult to find this out. The difficulty is, however, often reducible into that of knowing what gives one pleasure, and this, though difficult, is a safer guide and more easily distinguished. In all cases of doubt, the promptings of a kindly disposition are more trustworthy than the conclusions of logic, and sense is better than science.

Why I should have been at the pains to write such truisms I know not.

#### GODS AND PROPHETS (I. 108).

It is the manner of gods and prophets to begin : "Thou shalt have none other God or Prophet but me." If I were to start as a god or a prophet, I think I should take the line : "Thou shalt not believe in me. Thou shalt not have me for a god. Thou shalt worship any d——d thing thou likest except me." This should be my first and great commandment, and my second should be like unto it.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Above all things, let no unwary reader do me the injustice of believing in *me*. In that I write at all I am among the damned. If he must believe in anything, let him believe in the music of Handel, the painting of Giovanni Bellini and in the thirteenth chapter of St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians."—*Life and Habit*, close of Chapter II.

DR. MANDELL CREIGHTON AND MR. W. S. ROCKSTRO  
(V. 82, 104, 170).

The first time that Dr. Creighton asked me to come down to Peterborough, before he became Bishop of London, I was a little doubtful whether to go or not. As usual, I consulted my good clerk, Alfred, who said—

“Let me have a look at his letter, sir.”

I gave him the letter, and he said—

“I see, sir, there is a crumb of tobacco in it ; I think you may go.”

I went and enjoyed myself very much. I should like to add that there are very few men who have ever impressed me so profoundly and so favourably as Dr. Creighton. I have often seen him since, both at Peterborough and at Fulham, and like and admire him most cordially.

I paid my first visit to Peterborough at a time when that learned musician and incomparable teacher, Mr. W. S. Rockstro, was giving me lessons in medieval counterpoint, so I particularly noticed the music at divine service. The hymns were very silly, and of the usual Gounod-Barnby character. Their numbers were posted up in a frame and I saw there were to be five, so I called the first Farringdon Street, the second King's Cross, the third Gower Street, the fourth Portland Road, and the fifth Baker Street, those being stations on my way to Rickmansworth, where I frequently go for a walk in the country.

In his private chapel at night the bishop began his verse of the psalms always well before we had done the response to the preceding verse. It reminded me of what Rockstro had said to me a few weeks earlier to the effect that a point of imitation was always more effective if introduced before the other voices had finished. I told Rockstro about it and said that the bishop's instinct had guided him correctly—certainly I found his method more satisfactory

than if he had waited till we had finished. Rockstro smiled and, knowing that I was at the time forbidden to work, said—

“Satan finds some mischief still for idle brains to do.”

Talking of Rockstro, he scolded me once and said he wondered how I could have done such a thing as to call Handel “one of the greatest of all musicians,” referring to the great chords in *Erewhon*. I said that if he would look again at the passage he would find I had said not that Handel was “one of the greatest” but that he was “the greatest of all musicians,” on which he apologised.

#### PIGS (V. 106).

We often walk from Rickmansworth across Moor Park to Pinner. On getting out of Moor Park there is a public-house just to the left where we generally have some shandy-gaff and buy some eggs. The landlord had a noble sow, which I photographed for him. Some months afterwards I asked how the sow was. She had been sold. The landlord knew she ought to be killed and made into bacon, but he had been intimate with her for three years and some one else must eat her, not he.

“And what,” said I, “became of her daughter?”

“Oh, we killed her and ate her. You see we had only known her eighteen months.”

I wonder how he settled the exact line beyond which intimacy with a pig must not go if the pig is to be eaten.

#### PIORA (V. 213).

I am confident that I have written the following note in one or other of the earlier of these volumes, but I have

searched my precious indexes in vain to find it. No doubt as soon as I have retold the story I shall stumble upon it.

One day in the autumn of 1886 I walked up to Piora from Airolo, returning the same day. At Piora I met a very nice quiet man whose name I presently discovered, and who, I have since learned, is a well-known and most liberal employer of labour somewhere in the north of England. He told me that he had been induced to visit Piora by a book which had made a great impression upon him. He could not recollect its title, but it had made a great impression upon him ; nor yet could he recollect the author's name, but the book had made a great impression upon him ; he could not remember even what else there was in the book ; the only thing he knew was that it had made a great impression upon him.

This is a good example of what is called a residuary impression. Whether or no I told him that the book which had made such a great impression upon him was called *Alps and Sanctuaries* (see Chap. VI), and that it had been written by the person he was addressing, I cannot tell. It would be very like me to have blurted it all out and given him to understand how fortunate he had been in meeting me ; this would be so fatally like me that the chances are ten to one that I did it; but I have, thank Heaven, no recollection of sin in this respect, and have rather a strong impression that, for once in my life, I smiled to myself and said nothing.

#### AT FERENTINO (V. 18).

After dinner I ordered a coffee; the landlord, who also had had his dinner, asked me to be good enough to defer it for another year and I assented. I then asked him which was the best inn at Segni. He replied that it did not matter, that when a man had *quattrini* one albergo was as good as another. I said, No; that more depended on what

kind of blood was running about inside the *albergatore* than on how many *quattrini* the guest had in his pocket. He smiled and offered me a pinch of the most delicious snuff. His wife came and cleared the table, having done which she shed the water bottle over the floor to keep the dust down. I am sure she did it all to all the blessed gods that live in heaven, though she did not say so.

### THE IMPERFECT LADY (V. 61, 63).

There was one at a country house in Sicily where I was staying. She had been lent to my host for change of air by his friend the Marchese. She dined at table with us and we all liked her very much ; she was extremely pretty and not less amiable than pretty. We had to go through her bedroom to reach the dining-room, as also through my host's. When the Monsignore came, she dined with us just the same, and the old priest evidently did not mind at all. In Sicily they do not bring the scent of the incense across the dining-room table. And one would hardly expect the attempt to be made by people who use the oath "Santo Diavolo."

### MOZART (V. 186).

An old Scotchman at Boulogne was holding forth on the beauties of Mozart, which he exemplified by singing thus—



I maliciously assented, but said it was strange how strongly that air always reminded me of "Voi che sapete."

## DIVORCE (V. 175).

There was a man in the hotel at Harwich with an ugly, disagreeable woman who I supposed was his wife. I did not care about him, but he began to make up to me in the smoking-room.

"This divorce case," said he, referring to one that was being reported in the papers, "doesn't seem to move very fast."

I put on my sweetest smile and said: "I have not observed it. I am not married myself, and naturally take less interest in divorce."

He dropped me.

## THE WRATH TO COME (I. 209).

On the Monte Generoso a lady who sat next me at the table-d'hôte was complaining of a man in the hotel. She said he was a nuisance because he practised on the violin. I excused him by saying that I supposed some one had warned him to fly from the wrath to come, meaning that he had conceptions of an ideal world and was trying to get into it. (I heard a man say something like this many years ago and it stuck by me.)

## AT ENGLEFIELD GREEN (I. 177).

As an example of how anything can be made out of anything or done with anything by those who want to do it (as I said in *Life and Habit* that a bullock can take an eyelash out of its eye with its hind-foot—which I saw one of my bullocks in New Zealand do), at the Barley Mow, Englefield Green, they have a picture of a horse and dog talking to one another, made entirely of butterflies' wings, and very well and spiritedly done, too.

They have another picture, done in the same way, of a greyhound running after a hare, also good but not so good.

#### AT ABBEY WOOD (I. 202).

I heard a man say to another : " I went to live there just about the time that beer came down from 5d. to 4d. a pot. That will give you an idea when it was."

#### THE LATE KING VITTORIO EMANUELE (V. 162).

Cavaliere Negri, at Casale-Monferrato, told me not long since that when he was a child, during the troubles of 1848 and 1849, the King was lunching with his (Cav. Negri's) father, who had provided the best possible luncheon in honour of his guest. The King said—

" I can eat no such luncheon in times like these—give me some garlic."

The garlic being brought, he ate it along with a great hunch of bread, but would touch nothing else.

#### FIRE (I. 74).

I was at one the other night and heard a man say : " That corner stack is alight now quite nicely." People's sympathies seem generally to be with the fire so long as no one is in danger of being burned.

#### NOTES FOR EREWHON REVISITED (V. 54, 78, 96, 105, 110).

Let there be monks who have taken vows of modest competency (about £1,000 a year, derived from consols), who spurn popularity as medieval monks spurned money—and with about as much sincerity. Their great object is to try and find out what they like and then get it. They do

not live in one building, and there are no vows of celibacy, but, in practice, when any member marries he drifts away from the society. They have no profession of faith or articles of association, but, as they who hunted for the Holy Grail, so do these hunt in all things, whether of art or science, for that which commends itself to them as comfortable and worthy to be accepted. Their liberty of thought and speech and their reasonable enjoyment of the good things of this life are what they alone live for.

Let the Erewhonians have Westminster Abbeys of the first, second and third class, and in one of these let them raise monuments to dead theories which were once celebrated.

Let them study those arts whereby the opinions of a minority may be made to seem those of a majority.

Introduce an Erewhonian sermon to the effect that if people are wicked they may perhaps have to go to heaven when they die.

Let them have a Regius Professor of Studied Ambiguity.

Let the Professor of Worldly Wisdom pluck a man for want of sufficient vagueness in his saving-clauses paper.

Another poor fellow may be floored for having written an article on a scientific subject without having made free enough use of the words "patiently" and "carefully," and for having shown too obvious signs of thinking for himself.

Let them attach disgrace to any who do not rapidly become obscure after death.

#### MONEY (IV. 131).

It has such an inherent power to run itself clear of taint that human ingenuity cannot devise the means of making it work permanent mischief, any more than means can be found of torturing people beyond what they can bear. Even if a man founds a College of Technical Instruction, the chances are ten to one that no one will be taught anything

and that it will have been practically left to a number of excellent professors who will know very well what to do with it.

#### COOKING (I. 29).

There is a higher average of good cooking at Oxford and Cambridge than elsewhere. The dinners are better than the curriculum. But there is no Chair of Cookery, it is taught by apprenticeship in the kitchens.

#### WIT (I. 136).

There is no Professor of Wit at either University. Surely they might as reasonably have a professor of wit as of poetry.

#### PERSEUS AND ST. GEORGE (III. 40).

These dragon-slayers did not take lessons in dragon-slaying, nor do leaders of forlorn hopes generally rehearse their parts beforehand. Small things may be rehearsed, but the greatest are always do-or-die, neck-or-nothing matters.

#### SPECIALISM AND GENERALISM (I. 130).

Woe to the specialist who is not a pretty fair generalist, and woe to the generalist who is not also a bit of a specialist.

#### SILENCE AND TACT (IV. 81).

Silence is not always tact, and it is tact that is golden, not silence.

#### DEFINITION (IV. 137).

A definition is the enclosing a wilderness of idea within a wall of words.

## Two Points of View (IV. 66).

Everything must be studied from the point of view of itself, as near as we can get to this, and from the point of view of its relations, as near as we can get to them. If we try to see it absolutely in itself, unalloyed with relations, we shall find by and by that we have, as it were, whittled it away. If we try to see it in its relations to the bitter end, we shall find that there is no corner of the universe into which it does not enter. Either way the thing eludes us if we try to grasp it with the horny hands of language and conscious thought. Either way we can think it perfectly well—so long as we don't think about thinking about it. The pale cast of thought sickles over everything.

Practically everything should be seen as itself pure and simple so far as we can comfortably see it, and at the same time as not itself so far as we can comfortably see it, and then the two views should be combined so far as we can comfortably combine them. If we cannot comfortably combine them, we should think of something else.

## LYING (V. 182 ; VI. 46).

Truth does not consist in never lying, but in knowing when to lie and when not to do so.

It is only a good, sound, truthful person who can lie to any good purpose ; if a man is not habitually truthful his very lies will be false to him and betray him. The converse also is true ; if a man is not a good, sound, honest, capable liar there is no truth in him.

## AN OPEN MIND (V. 31, 45).

Cursed is he that does not know when to shut his mind. An open mind is all very well in its way, but it ought not to be so open that there is no keeping anything in or out of it. It should be capable of shutting its doors sometimes, or it may be found a little draughty.

## JOINING AND DISJOINING (I. 8 ; III. 27 ; V. 53).

One of the earliest notes I made when I began to make notes at all I found not long ago in an old book, since destroyed, which I had in New Zealand. It was to the effect that all things are either of the nature of a piece of string or a knife. That is, they are either for bringing and keeping things together, or for sending and keeping them apart. Nevertheless each kind contains a little of its opposite and some, as the railway train and the hedge, combine many examples of both. Thus the train, on the whole, is used for bringing things together, but it is also used for sending them apart, and its divisions into classes are alike for separating and keeping together. The hedge is also both for joining things (as a flock of sheep) and for disjoining (as for keeping the sheep from getting into corn). These are the more immediate ends. The ulterior ends, both of train and hedge, so far as we are concerned, and so far as anything can have an end, are the bringing or helping to bring meat or dairy produce into contact with man's inside, or wool on to his back, or that he may go in comfort somewhere to converse with people and join his soul on to theirs, or please himself by getting something to come within the range of his senses or imagination.

A piece of string is a thing that, in the main, makes for togetheriness ; whereas a knife is, in the main, a thing that makes for splitty-uppiness ; still, there is an odour of togetheriness hanging about a knife also, for it tends to bring potatoes into a man's stomach.

In high philosophy one should never look at a knife without considering it also as a piece of string, nor at a piece of string without considering it also as a knife.

(*To be continued.*)

# GENIUS

By SAMUEL BUTLER

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## GENIUS

**G**ENIUS is akin both to madness and inspiration and, as every one is both more or less inspired and more or less mad, every one has more or less genius. When, therefore, we speak of genius we do not mean an absolute thing which some men have and others have not, but a small scale-turning overweight of a something which we all have but which we cannot either define or apprehend—the quantum which we all have being allowed to go without saying.

This small excess weight has been defined as a supreme capacity for taking trouble, but he who thus defined it can hardly claim genius in respect of his own definition—his capacity for taking trouble does not seem to have been abnormal. It might be more fitly described as a supreme capacity for getting its possessors into trouble of all kinds and keeping them therein so long as the genius remains. People who are credited with genius have, indeed, been sometimes very painstaking, but they would often show more signs of genius if they had taken less. "You have taken too much trouble with your opera," said Handel to Gluck. It is not likely that the *Hailstone Chorus* or Mrs. Quickly cost their creators much pains, indeed we commonly feel the ease with which a difficult feat has been performed to be a more distinctive mark of genius than the fact that the performer took great pains before he could achieve it. Pains can serve genius, or even mar it, but they cannot make it.

We can rarely, however, say what pains have or have not been taken in any particular case, for, over and above the spent pains of a man's early efforts, the force of which may carry him far beyond all trace of themselves, there are the still more remote and invisible ancestral pains, repeated we know not how often nor in what fortunate correlation with pains taken in some other and unseen direction. This points to the conclusion that, though it is wrong to suppose the essence of genius to lie in a capacity for taking pains, it is right to hold that it must have been rooted in pains and that it cannot have grown up without them.

Genius, again, might perhaps almost as well be defined as a supreme capacity for saving other people from having to take pains, if the highest flights of genius did not seem to know nothing about pains one way or the other. What trouble can *Hamlet* or the *Iliad* save to any one? Genius can, and does, save it sometimes; the genius of Newton may have saved a good deal of trouble one way or another, but it has probably engendered as much new as it has saved old.

This, however, is all a matter of chance, for genius never seems to care whether it makes the burden or bears it. The only certain thing is that there will be a burden, for the Holy Ghost has ever tended towards a breach of the peace, and the New Jerusalem, when it comes, will probably be found so far to resemble the old as to stone its prophets freely. The world, thy world, is a jealous world, and thou shalt have none other worlds but it. Genius points to change and change is a hankering after another world, so the old world suspects it. Genius disturbs order, it unsettles *mores* and hence it is immoral. On a small scale it is intolerable, but genius will have no small scales; it is even more immoral for a man to be too far in front than to lag too far behind. The only absolute morality is absolute stagnation, but this is unpractical, so a peck of change is permitted to every one, but it must be a

peck only, whereas genius would have ever so many sacks full. There is a myth among some Eastern nation that at the birth of Genius an unkind fairy marred all the good gifts of the other fairies by depriving it of the power of knowing where to stop.

Nor does genius care more about money than about trouble. It is no respecter of time, trouble, money or persons, the four things round which human affairs turn most persistently. It will not go a hair's breadth from its way either to embrace fortune or to avoid her. It is, like Love, "too young to know the worth of gold." It knows, indeed, both love and hate, but not as we know them, for it will fly for help to its bitterest foe, or attack its dearest friend in the interests of the art it serves.

Yet this genius, which so despises the world, is the only thing of which the world is permanently enamoured, and the more it flouts the world, the more the world worships it, when it has once well killed it in the flesh. Who can understand this eternal crossing in love and contradiction in terms which warps the woof of actions and things from the atom to the universe? The more a man despises time, trouble, money, persons, place and everything on which the world insists as most essential to salvation, the more pious will this same world hold him to have been. What a fund of universal unconscious scepticism must underlie the world's opinions! For we are all alike in our worship of genius that has passed through the fire. Nor can this universal instinctive consent be explained otherwise than as the welling up of a spring whose sources lie deep in the conviction that great as this world is, it masks a greater, wherein its wisdom is folly and which we know as blind men know where the sun is shining, certainly, but not distinctly.

This should in itself be enough to prove that such a world exists, but there is still another proof in the fact that so many come among us showing instinctive and ineradicable familiarity with a state of things which has no counterpart

here, and cannot, therefore, have been acquired here. From such a world we come, every one of us, but some seem to have a more living recollection of it than others. Perfect recollection of it no man can have, for to put on flesh is to have all one's other memories jarred beyond power of conscious recognition. And genius must put on flesh, for it is only by the hook and crook of taint and flesh that tainted beings like ourselves can apprehend it ; only in and through flesh can it be made manifest to us at all ; and yet this same flesh cloaks it at the very time that it reveals it. It seems as though the flesh must have gone clean off it before it can be seen, and also that we must stand a long way from it, for the world grows more and more myopic as it grows older. And this brings another trouble, for by the time the flesh has gone off it enough and it is far enough off for us to see it without glasses, the chances are we shall have forgotten its very existence and lose the wish to see at the very moment of becoming able to do so. Hence there appears to be no remedy for the oft-repeated complaint that the world knows nothing of its greatest men. How can it be expected to do so ? And how can its greatest men be expected to know more than a very little of the world ? At any rate, they seldom do, and it is just because they cannot and do not that, if they ever happen to be found out at all, they are recognised as the greatest and the world weeps and wrings its hands that it cannot know more about them.

Lastly, if genius cannot be bought with money, still less can it sell what it produces. The only price that can be paid for genius is suffering, and this is the only wages it can receive. The only work that has any considerable permanence is written, more or less consciously, in the blood of the writer, or in that of his or her forefathers. Genius is like money, or, again, like crime, every one has a little, if it be only a halfpenny, and he can beg or steal this much if he has not got it ; but those who have little are rarely very fond of millionaires. People generally like and understand best

those who are of much about the same social standing and money status as their own ; and so it is for the most part as between those who have only the average amount of genius and the Homers, Shakespeares and Handels of the race.

And yet, so paradoxical is everything connected with genius that it almost seems as though the nearer people stood to one another in respect either of money or genius, the more jealous they become of one another. I have read somewhere that Thackeray was one day flattening his nose against a grocer's window and saw two bags of sugar, one marked tenpence halfpenny and the other elevenpence (for sugar has come down since Thackeray's time). As he left the window he was heard to say, " How they must hate one another ! " So it is in the animal and vegetable worlds. The war of extermination is generally fiercest between the most nearly allied species, for these stand most in one another's light. So here again the same old paradox and contradiction in terms meets us, like a stone wall, in the fact that we love best those who are in the main like ourselves, but when they get too like, we hate them, and, at the same time, we hate most those who are unlike ourselves, but if they become unlike enough, we may often be very fond of them.

Genius must make those that have it think apart, and to think apart is to take one's own view of things instead of being, like Poins, a blessed fellow to think as every man thinks. A man who thinks for himself knows what others do not, but does not know what others know. Hence the *belli causa*, for he cannot serve two masters, the God of his own inward light and the Mammon of common sense, at one and the same time. How can a man think apart and not apart ? But if he is a genius this is the riddle he must solve. The uncommon sense of genius and the common sense of the rest of the world are thus as husband and wife to one another ; they are always quarrelling, and common

sense, who must be taken to be the husband, always fancies himself the master—nevertheless genius is generally admitted to be the better half.

He who would know more of genius must turn to what he can find in the poets, or to whatever other sources he may discover, for I can help him no further.

S. BUTLER

